SPECIAL ISSUE! Choose one of four Tom-tastic covers!

DOCTOR WHO MAGAZINE

Bohemian rhapsodies

DWM celebrates the Tom Baker years
. . . and catches up with the man himself!

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DWM 290

'Did you see me wave to you on the television last week?'

Ah! It's a Tom Baker special!

It is just over 20 years since Tom Baker stepped from a West London building site and into the TARDIS. For seven more years he took us across the universe to share some of the most acclaimed adventures *Doctor Who* has ever offered. For these reasons, and because we *adore* him, DWM would like to present this special number devoted to the man, the myth and the magic that *is* Tom Baker.

For one month only, we present seven fascinating features from some of *Doctor Who* fandom's finest writers, which together offer a bold and challenging new commentary on Tom's reign.

This issue also serves up the first helping of a two-part conversation with the man himself. Interviewed for the recent *Doctor Who* theme night, Tom talks frankly about his work on the series. (Yes! That's right! He talks actually about *Doctor Who*!)

Andrew Pixley gets to grips with a giant robot in *The* **DWM** *Archive*, detailing the troubled production of Tom's first serial.

The Watcher contemplates fandom's unique relationship with Doctor Four in *It's the End, but . . .*

And on page 14, taking a cue from the early days of **DWM**, there's *A Letter from the Doctor . . .*

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Somebody to love

Season twelve

by **Steven Moffat**

Back in 1974 Doctor Who was a cape-swirling adventurer, with the gadgets of James Bond and the hair of an old lady. For five years we'd watched the Third Doctor mature from a dashing, debonair man of action into a tedious old moraliser with a scary bouffant. And then, one fateful winter Saturday in the late December of the Pertwee years, Tom Baker tumbled through the Tardis doors and reversed the polarity forever. Flashing eyes, nuclear teeth, and a hairstyle you only get by sticking your fingers in an electric socket, the Fourth Doctor was suddenly, resoundingly, boomingly here – and the days of UNIT's unpaid half-man-half-granny were even more suddenly over. The neutron flow would never be the same again.

I'm not sure Jon Pertwee ever recovered from this insultingly brilliant bit of recasting. But I know Tom Baker didn't. You can say what you like about today's star-driven, star-led, star-obsessed television – but it would have saved Tom Baker from *Doctor Who*. You only have to watch Season 12 to see that.

Looking at them now, those early stories, the most striking thing is that Tom just seems so young! Certainly he's markedly younger than he'll seem in a year's time. Younger even than Davison. He hasn't got all plumped-up and self-important yet. The fruity voice is just a tool, not half his performance. He's wiry, vital, funny and dangerous. Sexy, even. The grand, greying Jason King-a-like of the previous season has been swept away by a sort of radical, wild-eyed student, romping round the Universe, dispensing impassioned social justice (provided you're a biped and not green). He is – if one is being brutally honest – acting better than he ever will again. What we're seeing in Season 12, as always with Tom as the Doctor, is a charismatic, perfectly cast actor who knows he's got the part of a lifetime.

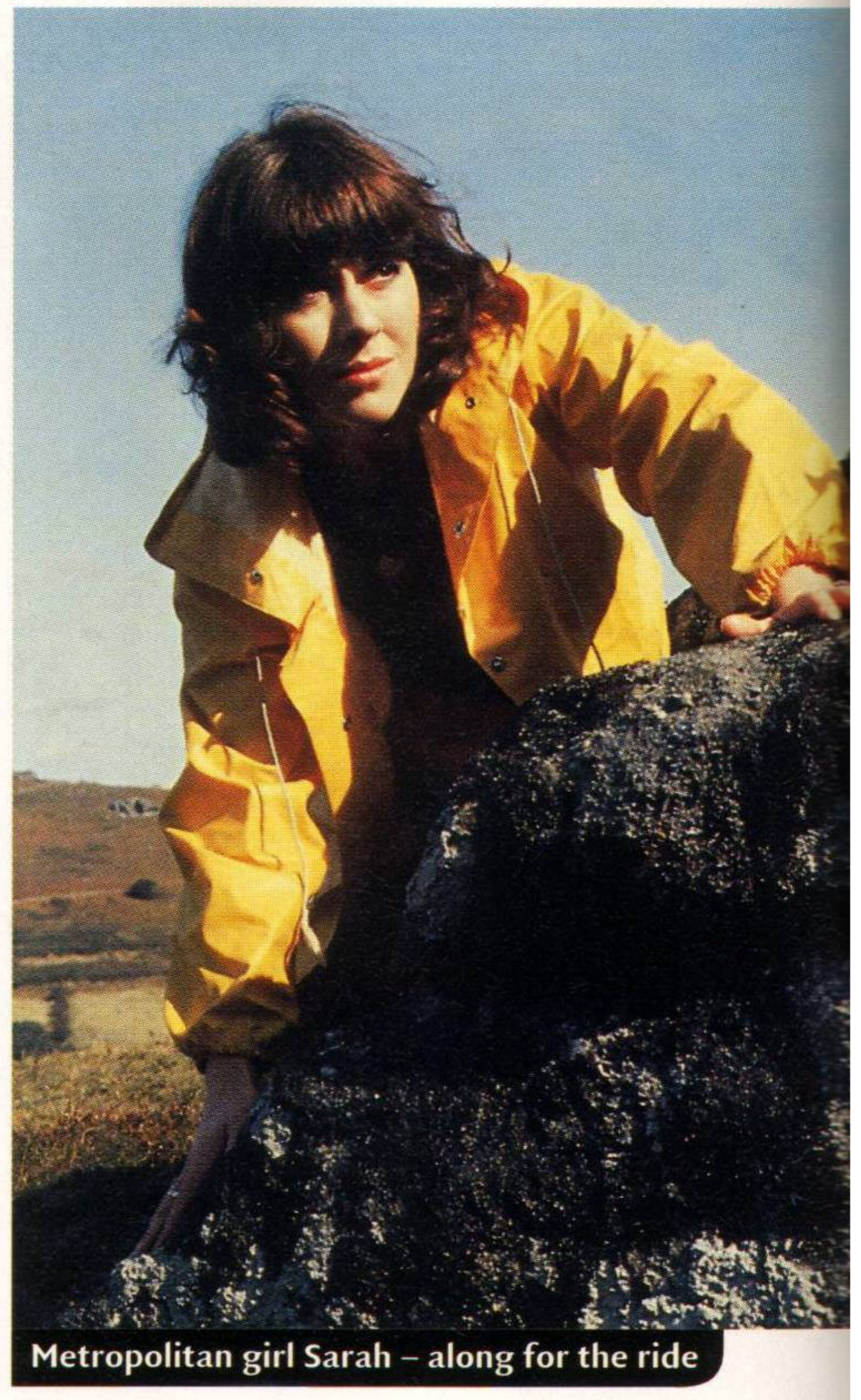
But here, at the very beginning, he has something else too, something which he'll never have again in this role. Something which gives him focus and energy and the all-important ability not to smirk at rubber. He has the possibility of failure.

It's hard to remember when you're watching, say, *The Ark In Space* – with the greatest, most iconic Doctor of them all battling some unusually ambitious bubble-wrap – that when it was made, Jon Pertwee was still firmly the Doctor in the minds of the public and Tom Baker was just some guy who turned up occasionally at Television Centre in an embarrassing scarf. Kids ignored him in the street. Tramps went un-patronised. Granny bosoms went untingled. He went to work, he saved the Universe, and Jon Pertwee got all the credit.

So imagine, for a moment, what that must have been like. Tom is on record talking, wisely and wittily, of the therapeutic power of applause. He has suggested that the world would be a better place if all the shagged-out executives, middle-managers and People With Dull Jobs came home to a round of applause from their entire street. He's absolutely right of course. But I wonder if he's thinking not so much of shagged-out executives but of himself playing the Doctor in 1974 to a bunch of cameras and boom mikes and that aching, months-long pin-drop of silence before the audience roared.

It's impossible to know what he was thinking way back then, but I imagine he was very frightened indeed. It must've been like rehearsing in the wings while your predecessor takes endless curtain calls on the stage. Behind-the-sofa scary.

So how different does this make his first year's take on the Time Lord? I think it's mainly this: the 1974 model of Tom Baker is eminently castable. You can imagine him playing something else. An unconventional copper who doesn't play by the rules? No problem! A villain in a costume drama? A cinch! Any number of the big Shakespearian roles? Born to it! This guy, this electric, nervy actor, would even be a great Sherlock Holmes – a role his older, post-*Who* self is going to blow so very badly!



Metropolitan girl Sarah – along for the ride

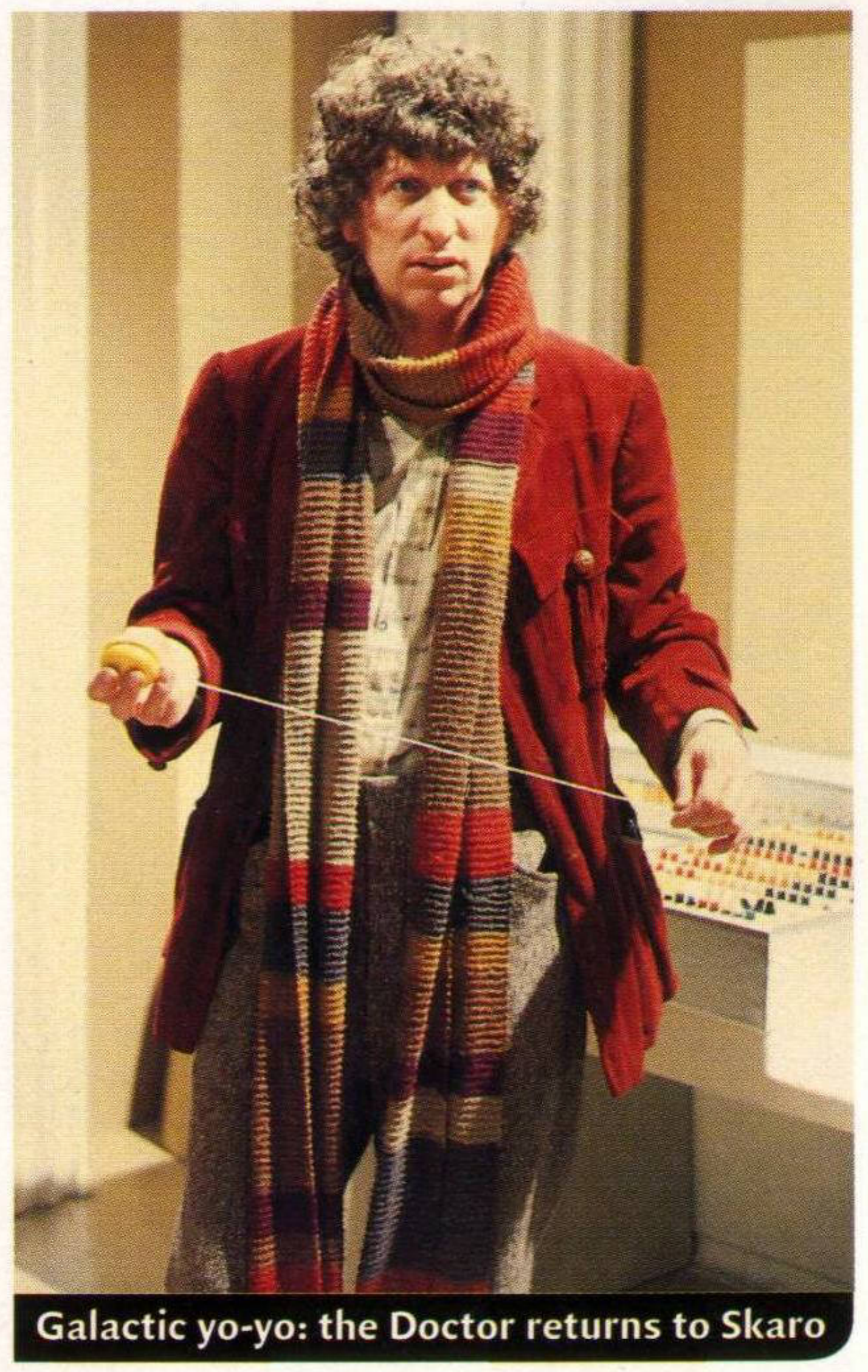
Later on, as Tom becomes so embedded in the series he doesn't have to try, you start to think no-one else could ever play the Doctor. And – guiltily – that this actor could play no-one else. He's too perfectly cast ever to be exactly *bad* in the part, but later he gets lazier, louder and ever more idiosyncratic, to the point where he's so convincingly from another planet he's made himself impossible to cast on this one. His performance as the Doctor is justly considered a television classic and he stamped this wonderful role so indelibly none of the others (many of them excellent) seem to matter that much, especially the ones who came after. But at what price?

All Tom's other possible futures – other telly leads, big stage roles, Bond baddie, grand old luvvie of the theatre – are scattered to the winds. After seven years of dazzling small screen heroism, he would be led from the TARDIS, fruity-voice and anecdoting wildly, and locked forever into an advertising voice-over booth, his final cry of "But it's smaller on the ins–" cut off by the click of a sound-proofed door.

Run away! The Doctor tries to escape from Earth in *Robot*

In Season 12 Tom Baker brings wit, vitality and a never-to-be-seen-again edge to the Doctor

From the vantage point of Season 12 let me state the blindingly, damningly obvious: Tom stayed way too long. And I really believe that this wouldn't happen today. It wouldn't be allowed to. Today he'd have permission to stay in the TARDIS for about as long as Robson Green pushed a trolley in *Casualty*. Humourless, get-ahead, star-hungry television executives would have sprung from their chairs, consulted their manuals on Sounding Sincere and got young Mr Baker on the phone. He'd have been sat down in a smart restaurant, opposite some searing young exec with an exact haircut and a calculated shirt and a smile that never quite reaches his mouth, and he'd have listened to a lot words like "Tom Baker niche" and "encouraging demographic" and "developing our relationship." He'd have been terribly loyal to *Doctor Who* – until about half-way down the second bottle. And he'd probably never have noticed that the exec was on mineral water all the time. That's the way it would happen now. It's the way it should've happened then. But by remaining too long among the stars, Tom Baker failed to become one.



Galactic yo-yo: the Doctor returns to Skaro

In case this is sounding a little harsh, a little judgemental, please understand this: all I'm saying is that Tom Baker is a genuinely wonderful actor and – more rarely, more preciously – a genuine star. Check him out in Season 12 if you don't believe me. He's still under control. Still subtle. He still looks at the other actors when they're talking. He's still eager to please us and still nervous that he won't. He has it all. And somebody, somewhere, should've noticed.

Perhaps I'm wrong. Perhaps Tom was approached, persuaded, seduced to go elsewhere. Perhaps he loved the show so much he couldn't bear to go. If that's true, then I fear he may be the greatest *Doctor Who* fan of us all. The actor who loved the Doctor so much he grew an extra heart.

But anyway, this is about remembrance, not regret. Season 12 isn't my favourite set of stories by any means. But it's my favourite Tom Baker. Not because he was a better Doctor back then – that's entirely debatable. Because he's a better actor. So have another look at those early episodes. Remember he hasn't claimed the role yet; rather he's still fighting to win it. Enjoy his wit, vitality, the never-to-be-seen-again edge he brings to the Time Lord. Enjoy the fact that once, long ago, our treasured little show got a good man's best. And try to forget that somewhere in the icy reaches of his future the Voice-Over Booth Of Doom is creaking open to receive him.

Season 12. It would never be quite this good again. DWM

Hammer to fall

Ground force: Sarah and the Doctor flee the Krynoid in *The Seeds of Doom*

Season thirteen

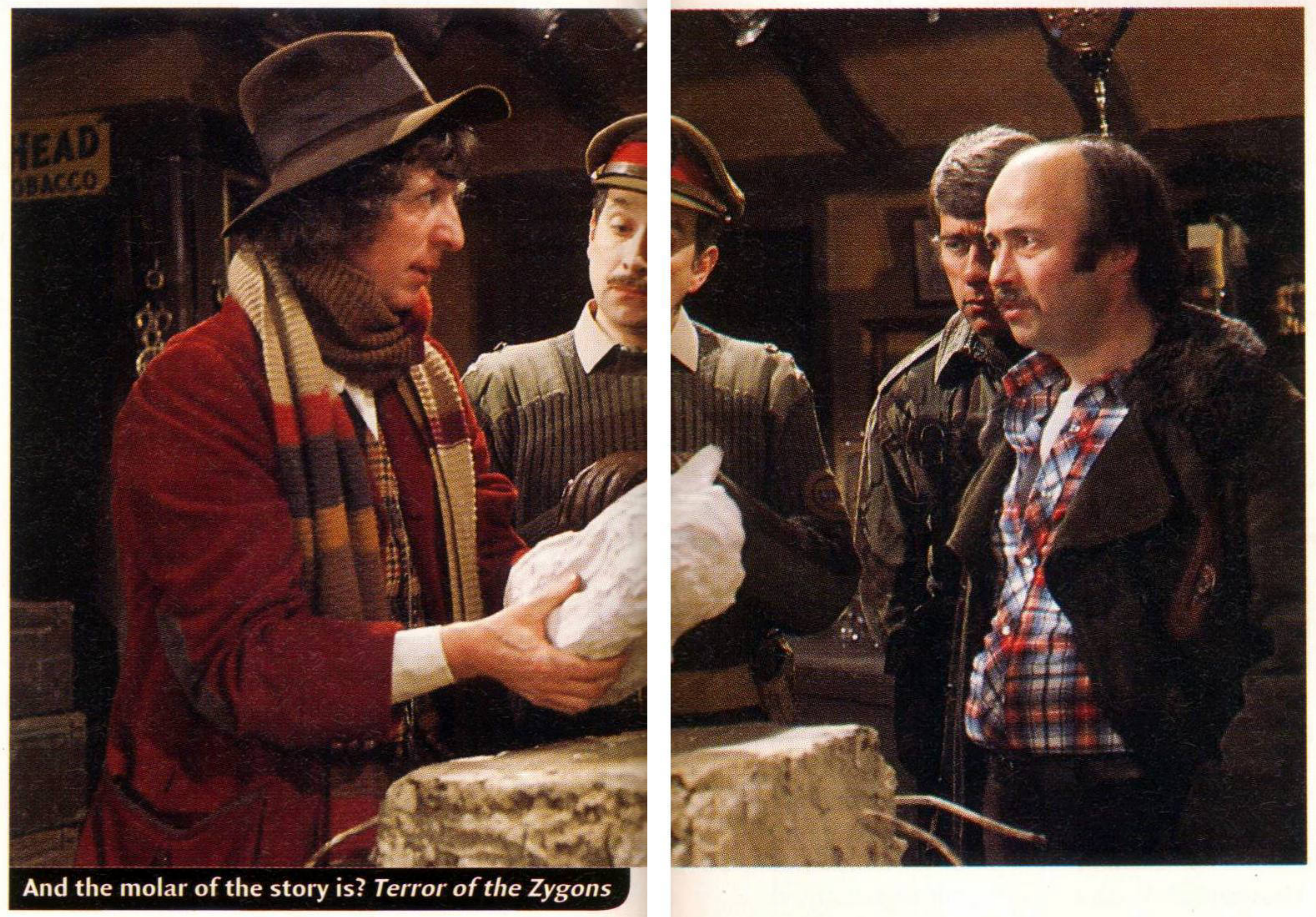
by Marcus Hearn

It's something of an effort to recall what first hooked me about *Doctor Who*. When I think about some of the earliest episodes I remember, my head swims with names and constructions that would have meant nothing to me when I was a behind-the-sofa space cadet. Back then I didn't know the names of the show's producer or script editor, and I barely had any memory of Jon Pertwee's Doctor – let alone the two fellas who had gone before him. I didn't know anything about Mary Whitehouse, and had certainly never seen any Gothic horror films. In fact, all the elements we have subsequently attached to Season 13 (in an attempt, I suspect, to justify our ongoing appreciation of this children's entertainment) were a complete mystery to me in 1975.

Doctor Who's 13th series was one of the few seasons when *Doctor Who* was consistently anything from first episode to last. It wasn't space opera, it wasn't a thriller, and it certainly didn't harbour any pretensions of being educational. Season 13 had the simple aim of scaring children out of their wits. All my most disturbing memories of *Doctor Who* emanate from this collection of stories: the foetal Zygons, the robotic mummies, the android Sarah's face simply 'falling off', the blinded Sarah stumbling across Solon's headless creature behind some curtains . . .

I needed no justification to love this stuff; like every child I wanted to dabble in things grown-ups did, and *Doctor Who* seemed fairly grown-up to me. If anything saved me from having nightmares, however, then it was Tom Baker's enchanting Doctor Who. He wandered in and out of situations where he really had no business. I didn't know it at the time, but those situations had names: *Forbidden Planet* (*Planet of Evil*), *The Mummy* (*Pyramids of Mars*), *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and *Quatermass II* (*The Android Invasion*), *Frankenstein* (*The Brain of Morbius*) and *The Thing From Another World* (*The Seeds of Doom*). Luckily, *Doctor Who* took me with him into these X-rated nightmares, and that made it OK. I would never have gone on my own.

Borrowing from a bunch of scary films is not enough, however. These stories boast many other assets that help them pass the 'memory cheats' test. Most notable of these is the mercurial Tom Baker himself. His Doctor is at his most alien during this season, snapping at his old chum the Brigadier in *Terror of the Zygons* and berating Sarah at the beginning of *Pyramids of Mars*. Elsewhere, he alienates us in more subtle ways – by acting in an uncharacteristically human way. The nonchalant way the Doctor orders a drink in the pub during *The Android Invasion*, and slips into the role of private investigator for the World Ecology Bureau in *The Seeds of Doom*, are not to be trusted as indicators that this man is 'One of Us'. Which makes them all the more baffling.



And the molar of the story is? *Terror of the Zygons*

Photos: BBC Video [4]

Set visit: a trip to the Red Planet in *Pyramids of Mars*

Possession – one of the most compelling tools of the horror writer's trade – is a theme that runs through this season. From Tullock Moor to the jungles of Zeta Minor, from leafy Edwardian England to the present-day Antarctic, mankind is vulnerable to possession by parasitical alien organisms. Even Sarah Jane Smith succumbs to robotic duplication on the planet Oseidon. It's been said many times before, but *Doctor Who* is at its most successful when it dabbles in the dark stuff.

Season 13 harboured no pretensions – it had the simple aim of scaring children out of their wits

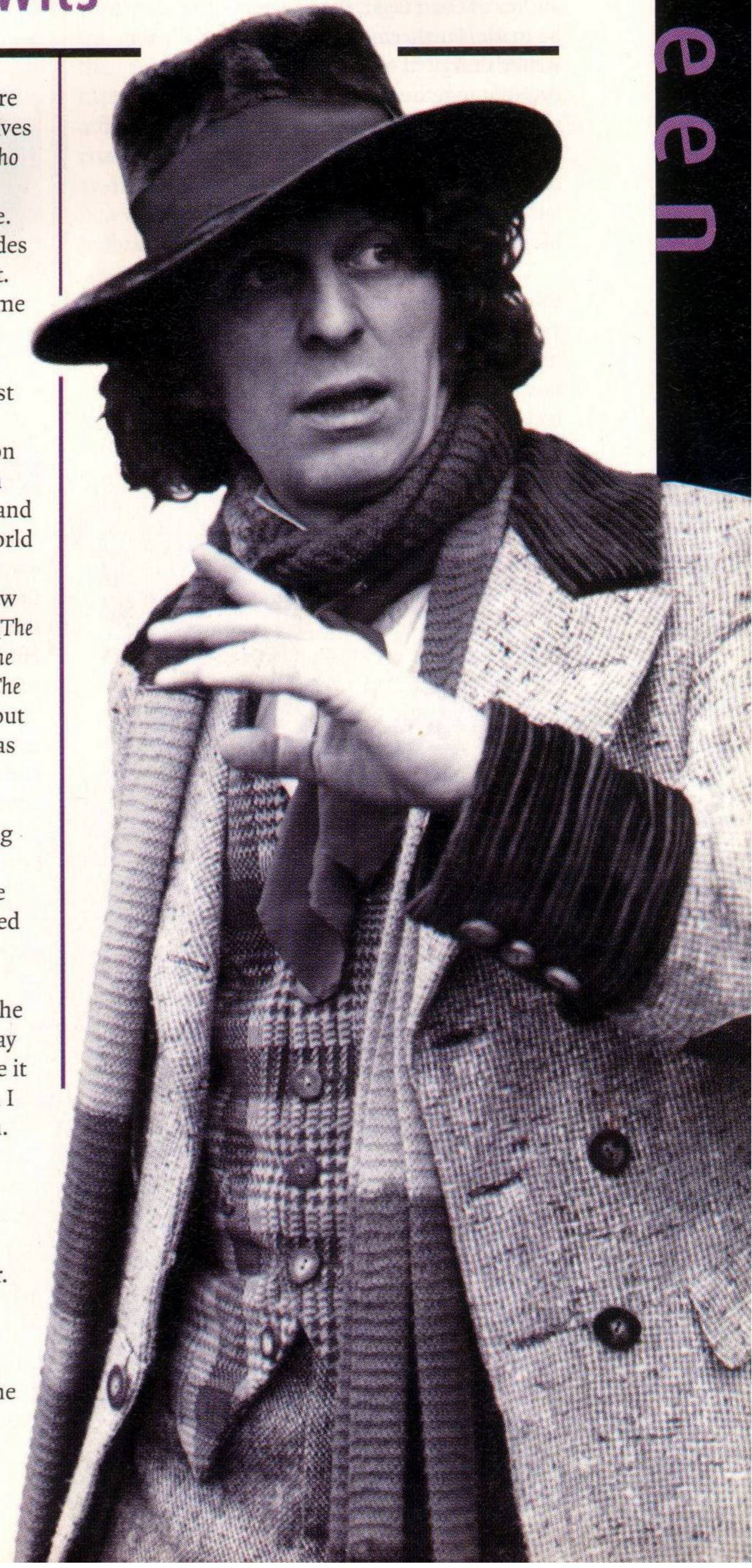
One of the great strengths of *The Avengers*, that other fondly remembered telly institution, was its oblique view of pastoral England as an elaborate cover for all manner of power-crazed eccentrics and scheming murderers. If one similarly accepts that *Doctor Who*-land is essentially the Home Counties, then it's difficult to think of a season where our favourite Time Lord's manor was better exploited. Never has the English countryside seemed more sinister than when it was patrolled by murderous mummies and parasitic alien life-forms. Or when, as in the case of *The Android Invasion*, it wasn't the English countryside at all. It's one thing finding a Yeti on your loo in Tooting Bec; it's quite another to discover that the locations for your family's Sunday afternoon picnics are crawling with all manner of ghouls, themselves on a day trip from Hammer House. *Doctor Who* has of course got very little to do with outer space; some of it just happens to be set there. The stuff that isn't set there – and this includes most of Season 13 – looks all the better for it. Only *Planet of Evil* and *The Brain of Morbius* come croppers in the scenery department, and they're both so surreal that they may as well be taking place in some kind of Expressionist nightmare anyway.

The enduring nostalgia we hold for Season 13 continues to stoke its reputation. My own nostalgia lies in they fact that these stories, and Tom Baker's Doctor, were a window on a world of horror that was otherwise denied to me.

It couldn't last, of course. There were a few subsequent dips into the horror film vaults (*The Hand of Fear* recalled *The Hands of Orlac* and *The Talons of Weng-Chiang* suggested Hammer's *The Phantom of the Opera* in several key respects) but having plundered the greats the next step was to borrow from the not-so-greats. Even the mighty Tom could not rescue *The Invisible Enemy*, which had the smart idea of remaking *Fantastic Voyage* on a budget of twopence.

I occasionally dipped into the programme during the mid-to-late 1980s, partly motivated by nostalgia and partly by the hope that the programme would rediscover its Gothic 'golden age'. It never did, of course. When the programme's love affair with horror gave way to irony, our relationship cooled. By the time it adopted pretensions towards science fiction I was already contemplating a trial separation. Divorce was just around the corner.

By this time I was old enough to look up Robert Holmes' sleeve and realise that he'd achieved such magic with a little help from Robert Louis Stevenson and Jimmy Sangster. My enthusiasm for those episodes did not diminish as a result. Of all the episodes I've ever seen, these remain the most elegant, romantic and disturbing. In short, they're the most grown-up *Doctor Who* there ever was.



One vision

Season fourteen

by **Lance Parkin**

Chapter and verse: the Doctor in Prydonian robes in *The Deadly Assassin*

Fans worry that changes made to any new *Doctor Who* will ruin it. Some criticised the 1996 TV Movie for its 'Americanisms' – car chases and a love interest, put there to appeal to a mass audience. Others accused Virgin's *New Adventures* of 'going too far'. But too far from what? *Lungbarrow*, the last Seventh Doctor NA and the novel that is seen as particularly egregious, was written by the author of *Ghost Light*, the last television story to be made. Furthermore, it was essentially the writer's original vision of that story, and brought together the strands of the 'master plan' hinted at on TV from 1987-89. Instead of indicating how far Virgin perverted the course of *Doctor Who*, *Lungbarrow* was the purest distillation of what the television series had been like when it ended.

The notion that the books have 'changed' things is predicated on the idea that the television series existed in some fixed state. It's a notion encouraged by episode guides which reel off plot summaries without capturing the feel of the individual stories and chronologies which studiously slot *The Gunfighters* and *Ghost Light* next to each other, as if they were the same sort of thing.

Many fans also believe that at some point *Doctor Who* went off the rails. It's easy to see why: *Doctor Who* used to command over ten million viewers, and was an essential part of winter Saturday evenings. You used to be sad if you *didn't* watch *Doctor Who*. Halcyon days. But problems emerge when you try to identify when this golden age ended. It was long before the show was scheduled against *Coronation Street*. The BBC mishandled the 'hiatus' in 1985, but few fans would argue that the 22nd season was *Doctor Who* at its best. Moving the show from Saturday night and Tom Baker's departure actually boosted ratings. According to many fans, 1977-79 producer Graham Williams oversaw increasingly silly, shoddily-made stories. It's more popular with fans than it was ten years ago, but they still can't shake the notion that before Williams *Doctor Who* had been 'proper drama'; it had been 'serious'. Before that, it was *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*.

When you hit *Talons*, few fans would argue that you've found that golden age. It's quite a way back – 23 years ago and counting – but it's there. It's the capstone of a good season, and the final word from producer Philip Hinchcliffe, leaving on a high after three strong years. When fans think about *Doctor Who*'s 'spirit' it tends to be 'like' Season 14: all velvet jackets, wood panels, dimly-lit golds, purples and mahogany, disfigured villains lurking in crypts, ancient evils abroad. What fans label 'Gothic'. When Philip Segal 'reinvented' *Doctor Who*, he did so by returning to this season, at least superficially. This is what *Doctor Who* always used to be like, before things went wrong.

Viewed from this distance, the Hinchcliffe era seems monolithic. The only real criticism that anyone can muster, barring sensitivities that balk at seeing white actors playing Chinamen, is that it tends to feel a bit samey – the Doctor's knocked out, the companion's hypnotised, there's a chase through the woods and the manor house burns down. In the late 1980s, fans urged a return to this 'classic' model to save the show. A few of the novels have consciously attempted to follow the Hinchcliffe formula, but the results have generally been plodding. The reason why they fail is simple: Season 14 wasn't a period when the show pastiched its own past. Season 14 was a period of fundamental, dynamic change.

These were not changes forced on the production team by desperation. A few qualms about violence aside, the programme wasn't in any danger. Philip Hinchcliffe was moving on, but there was no doubt Tom Baker would be back for his fourth season (the last Doctor to achieve that). Most television shows in such a position would be tempted to play things safe. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. But Hinchcliffe wasn't so complacent.

What fans think of as Doctor Who's spirit tends to be like Season 14 – all disfigured villains lurking in crypts

The 'past' at this point meant the Pertwee era, and Hinchcliffe used this season to sever the last ties to it. Sarah's final story was the first for a decade to be set on contemporary Earth which made no reference to UNIT. The next story would see the return of the Master, another icon from that time (the only 'old monster' of the season). Rather than introduce a Roger Delgado lookalike, as John Nathan-Turner would later do, *The Deadly Assassin* reimagined the Doctor's arch enemy as a disfigured creature quite unlike Pertwee's charming nemesis. Gone were the cosy certainties, gone were all-powerful Time Lords who popped up to help the Doctor and villains who always played fair. And, I barely need to remind anyone, fans back then were as vocal condemning *The Deadly Assassin* for depicting a new Gallifrey as those who hated *Lungbarrow* were when it did the same thing.

Perhaps it's not a coincidence that the stories of the 14th season all demonstrate the dangers of not changing. Time and again we are shown that societies can't stand still; do, and they fall into stagnation, performing empty rituals which only hint at past glories. Hieronymous worships in a ruined Roman temple, the Sevateem merely mimic the actions of their astronaut ancestors, even the Time Lords mouth the words but fail to understand the mysteries of their past. Technology, though, is not the answer. Instead of facilitating change or making life richer, it leads to indolence and decadence. Worse, it allows the barbarians and madmen to recreate the evils of the past in more efficient form. In the far future of humanity, robot slaves rise up against their pampered human masters; the Tesh are as brutal, and less human, than the savage Sevateem; Magnus Greel's future Earth is in the midst of a dark age of war and war crimes.

CONTROLLED AREA
RADIOACTIVE
SOURCE
EXPOSED
DO NOT ENTER

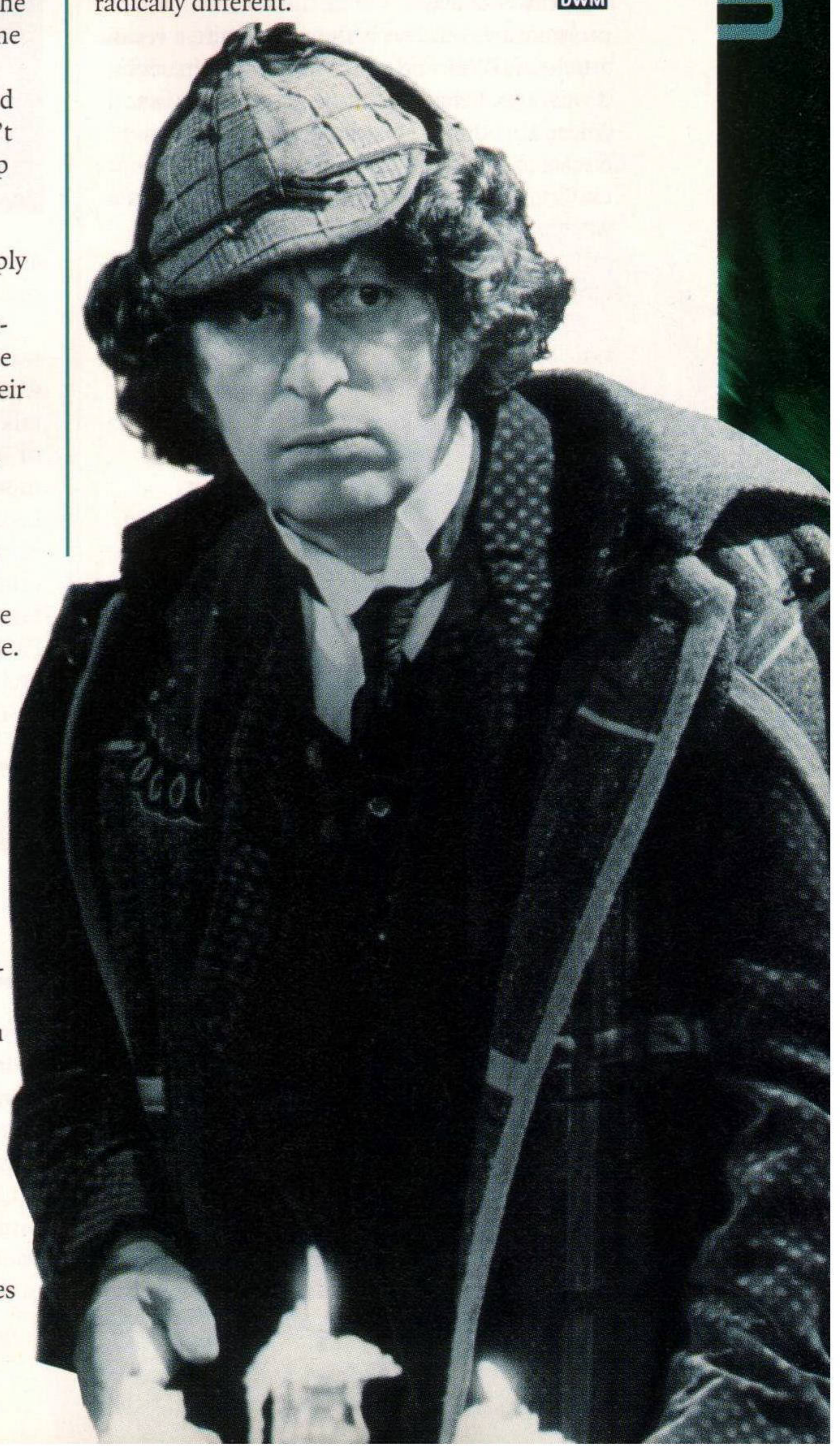
Critical mass: Eldrad emerges from the Nunton reactor in *The Hand of Fear*

Here the darkness has never been blacker – there are black walls, dark dimensions, a world in permanent winter, there's literally a black hole at the heart of Gallifrey. In other eras, science was a beacon of light against the forces of superstition. Here science and superstition go hand in glove. Kastria and the Storm Mine depend on technology that fails them. Both the Sevateem and the Time Lords worship pieces of technology as powerful relics. In the UNIT era, politicians were blinkered, and some individuals were secretly after personal gain. Now the political classes openly plot to assassinate one another, and there's little to distinguish between the methods of the villains and good guys like Rokon and Borusa. The rulers don't need to terrorise their people – they just keep them in ignorance. When something challenges the system – either a malevolent outsider like the Master or the Helix, or simply a technocrat with a murderous agenda, like Eldrad or Taren Capel – the rulers are powerless to prevent their citizens being killed, one after the other. Those that can't shake off their dogmatic beliefs are condemned to become victims – even as their robots strangle them, the crew of the Storm Mine refuse to accept that robots are capable of murder.

This is not the Manichean struggle of the Key to Time season, with Good/Light and Evil/Darkness as balanced forces. Here, there are only tiny points of light in a dark universe. The hope lies in individual free-thinkers in positions of power who challenge the old order and who can persuade honest men to leave the safety of their homes to fight. It's entirely fitting that Leela, the Doctor's new companion, is willing to be exiled from her tribe, even executed, for her lack of beliefs. As the Renaissance dawns in *The Masque of Mandragora*, it will be the Giulianos of this world who will lead mankind from the darkness. The Doctor himself is recast as a member of his planet's leading élite – a man who has renounced that birthright to fight for what's important.

The irony is that fans see *The Talons of Weng-Chiang* as the ultimate Hinchcliffe story, the apotheosis of its era, in the way *Planet of the Spiders* was a summation of the Pertwee years. It isn't. *Talons* points the way ahead, to the one-liners and literary pastiches that would dominate the Williams era. It sends itself up without being 'a comedy', and it's the first story to do that. Like *The Deadly Assassin*, it's a pilot for an entirely new kind of *Doctor Who*.

I hope new *Doctor Who*, in whatever form, is like Season 14. The show then had the confidence to smash some of the old icons and ignore the rest. It was a series run by people who delighted in making changes and stirring things up, who looked to the future, rather than ritually trying to invoke the past. A drama capable of telling complex stories and attracting a big audience. A golden age that convinces you that it was always this good, and *Doctor Who* was always just like this. I want new *Doctor Who* to be the same as Season 14: radically different. DWM



Photos: BBC Video [3]

season fifteen

Bohemian rhapsodies

We are the cha

Season fifteen

by Gareth Roberts

I've worked in television for three years, almost exclusively on soap operas. These are the only dramas left made at an incredible pace, week-in week-out, in purpose-built sets with cuts cued in from the gallery. The days are long and tough on cast and crew. Once, all TV drama was made like this. *Doctor Who* was made like this. When I see old episodes of *Doctor Who* now, I don't see wobbly sets or ray-gun beams which aren't quite lined up. I don't worry that the subtext of the particular story is left underdeveloped. I consider it amazing that the makers of *Doctor Who*, working to the same tight schedule as *Coronation Street* or *Brookside* do today, but with the added burden of tons of mechanical effects and visual effects, managed to produce anything at all.

Doctor Who was always a children's programme – and so it should remain, a recent article in **DWM** said. And probably quite right it was, too. I was one of the people who first voiced this then unfashionable opinion in fan circles in the early 1990s. But we tend to see children as a group, a homogenous lump, in a way that adults never would be. And the true afficionados of *Doctor Who* were strange children.

Listen. I am at my grandad's house in Oxford the weekend Part One of *Image of the Fendahl* goes out. On the Friday night my grandad's TV breaks down. It has tinted everybody a shade of mauve for months, but this night in October 1977, probably during *Nationwide*, it finally gives out. The man from DER can't come til the Monday. This is pre-VCR, pre-puberty. A little panic sets in. I remember the trailer from the week before – a young woman's face, a throbbing heartbeat, a malignant glowing skull. What am I to do?

President tense: Rodan, Andred, Leela and Borusa confront the Doctor in *The Invasion of Time*

The true afficionados of Doctor Who were always strange children

Fortunately, next day, the family next door, the Dwaynes, take pity. Mrs Dwayne says it's fine to drop over – her three kids all love *Doctor Who*. But – horror! – she has not checked with them. And when I go round I discover that the four young Dwaynes have strayed. They are devotees of *The Man From Atlantis*.

Who can blame them? *The Man From Atlantis* is a fast-paced, quick-cut American adventure series with photogenic leads, exotic locales, and a story that's easy to follow and tied up in one exciting episode.

But as I've been invited round specially to watch *Doctor Who*, we watch *Doctor Who*. And it would have to be the slowest, grinding, talkiest, folksiest, most old-fashioned episode of *Doctor Who* ever made. No sight of K9, no monster to speak of, hardly any Doctor or Leela. "I'm not disputing the results of your excellent potassium-argon test," thunders Professor Adam Colby, "but there is no way Eustace can have got himself buried under the Paleolithic slime 12 million years before archaeology says he can ever have existed!"

The Dwaynes fidget and groan. They long to turn over. I love it. I imagine you did too.

It's amusing to think of *Doctor Who* as high-brow – but, comparatively speaking, it was. It was also, from the opening moments of *An Unearthly Child* to the closing seconds of *Survival*, the very definition of 'old hat'. This explains the inordinately high proportion, in *Doctor Who* fandom, of old-fashioned, sexless middle-class boys called Jonathan.

Now, the best thing about Season 15 was the trailers. The "Back for 26 weeks of adventures" one which aired that first Saturday morning in September – a snatch of the title sequence; the Virus flashes up to the Doctor from the TARDIS controls; Leela, in sweater and slacks, tracks through mists; the Titan shuttle brushes the plague cloud; an old man is absorbed by a green glow; a hand that's clearly the Doctor's, covered in wiry white fur, aims a laser at Leela's back.

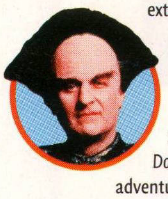
The weekly "Saturday on BBC1" trailers were even better: a five-second tease of the night's episode, always accompanied by *The Crunch Part 1* by the Rah Band. Especially exciting when it was the first episode of a new story. Leela and the Doctor see Cordo about to jump; Tala is regenerated; "I claim the Presidency of the High Council of the Time Lords . . ."

It's odd that Season 15 was seen by the *Doctor Who* fans of its time (and still is by some) as the start of a descent into simple-minded, lightweight children's programming. For me, it seems the coldest, least comforting, most adult era of the entire series. The Doctor's relationship with Leela, who foisted herself upon him, is tolerant at best. He loved Sarah Jane, used to plead with her to take just one more trip aboard the TARDIS. He seems to regard Leela as an amusing encumbrance. The one quality they share, as demonstrated at its best in *Horror of Fang Rock*, is a ruthless

Photos: BBC Video [3]

Gallifrey Guardian

Babylon 5 and *EastEnders* stars in new *Who*



Actor Peter Jurasik – more familiar to *Babylon 5* fans as Londo, the Centauri ambassador – recently extended a holiday in Britain to appear with Peter Davison and Sarah Sutton in the *Doctor Who* audio adventure *Winter for the Adept*, penned by Andrew Cartmel. A week earlier, the role of 16-year old Pompeii slave Aglae in Steve Lyon's Seventh Doctor historical *The Fires of Vulcan* was taken by Gemma Bissix – once Nigel Bates' adopted daughter Claire in *EastEnders*.

The Fires of Vulcan also features the return of Bonnie Langford as companion Mel. Langford was reportedly thrilled with the script and immensely enjoyed the recording session, asking production company Big Finish for the chance to do more. Expect a new Sixth Doctor and Mel adventure soon!

Finally, as you may guess from the preview feature this issue, the plays *Red Dawn* and *The Genocide Machine* have been swapped in the schedule, with *Red Dawn* now due in May.

Panopticon 2000 secures BBC sponsorship

Panopticon – which for 20 years has been Britain's biggest and most ambitious *Doctor Who* convention – returns after a year off for a special Millennium event in September. Panopticon 2000 also seems set to receive the official backing of BBC Worldwide, making it the first convention to do so since the Anniversary Panopticon in 1993.

This year's event will be taking place over the weekend of 2-3 September in Manchester. To encourage early booking, tickets ordered before 30 June have been discounted to £55 for the whole weekend, £35 for Saturday only and £30 for Sunday only.

To apply for tickets, send a cheque or postal order payable to Dominitemporal Services Ltd to Panopticon 2000, PO Box 7831, London SW15 6YD.

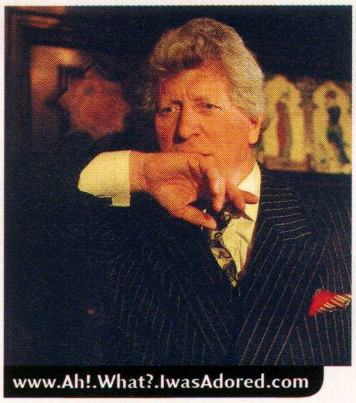
Baker goes on-line to talk to fans via new official website

Tom goes dot.com

Perhaps following the lead set by Bonnie Langford and her *www.bonnielangford.co.uk* pages, Tom Baker is to launch his own official website for fans of him and his work.

The site, which was scheduled to come on-line on 1 April, can be found at *www.officialtombakerwebsite.co.uk* – snappier domain names presumably having already been claimed – and will also allow those logging on to join the new Official Tom Baker Fan Club.

The site and the club are to be run by Tree Root Productions Ltd, a company that has already been involved in the marketing of several Tom Baker-related products; most notably prints of June Hudson's design for his Season 18 costume and the upcoming CD audio book of Baker's children's story, *The Boy Who Kicked Pigs*. The website will be designed and housed by RJO Internet Developments and Consultancy.



www.Ah!.What?.IwasAdored.com

Attractions promised for the website by Tree Root include the chance to ask Tom Baker questions about his work, chat with him directly, and to bid at auction for rare, original memorabilia (some supplied direct from Baker).

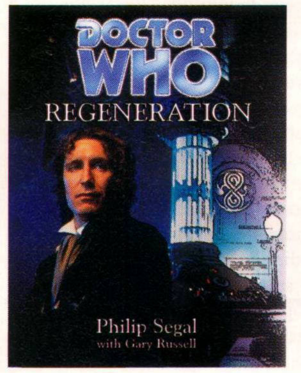
Lee Rooth, director of Tree Root, told **DWM**: "This will be an interactive, evolving and developing project which will be constantly monitored and updated. Baker himself commented: "The fans have been so very loyal, and this is one way I can feel I'm giving them something new."

Four lavish new guides planned for summer and autumn release

Who non-fiction bonanza

Contrary to rumour, BBC Books are pushing ahead with plans for *Doctor Who: The Scripts – Season Twelve*, tentatively scheduled for publication in November. The volume, a glossy hardback weighing in at a whopping 200,000 words, will likely have a price tag of £15.99.

As well as offering the complete camera scripts for serials *Robot* to *Revenge of the Cybermen*, the book will also contain reviews of each of these stories and detailed production notes covering cuts, late additions and technical details. Justin Richards will be contributing editor, with Barnaby Harsent as co-editor and **DWM** Archivist Andrew Pixley as project consultant.



Meanwhile, a number of other publishers are offering *Doctor Who* non-fiction books of their own this year. *Doctor Who: Regeneration* – the "full and frank" inside story of the production of the 1996 *Doctor Who* TV Movie by Philip Segal and Gary Russell – which was dropped by Virgin Books late last year when the company decided to sever its link with the series, has been picked up by HarperCollins (publishers of *Who on Earth is Tom Baker?*). *Regeneration* has been given a new front cover and is now scheduled for a September launch, with a cover price of £17.99 – a saving for readers of £2.00 on Virgin's original version!

June will see the publication of *Doctor Who: Pocket Essentials* by Mark Campbell. The new 'Pocket Essentials' range is planned to cover various aspects of pop culture and is marketed as: "A series for the MTV generation. Short, snappy text. Easy to read. Riveting. Enthusiastic. Fresh. Critical. Packed with facts, backed up with opinion, crammed with information, this is the first step into the world of film and television."

Campbell promises his volume on *Doctor Who* will, more specifically, "Put each Doctor's era under the microscope with facts and informed opinion on all their stories. There's an in-depth reference section detailing further reading, fascinating and bizarre *Doctor Who* websites, and a short history of spin-off stories and merchandising." This bite-size guide to *Doctor Who* will retail at £2.99 for 96 pages.

Finally, *Howe's Transcendental Toybox – The Unofficial Guide to Doctor Who Collectibles* is expected by the end of 2000. This massive work from *Who* merchandise expert David J Howe is promoted as: "The complete collector's guide to everything that has ever been produced to tie in with the series. From hardback books, trading cards and chocolate Christmas tree decorations, to stained glass windows, underpants and metal models, this book is a fascinating look at the history and collectability of *Doctor Who* merchandise."

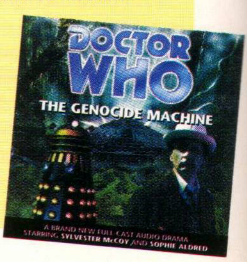
Howe's Transcendental Toybox will only be produced in limited numbers according to demand and a cover price of between £20 and £25 is expected. Anyone interested in purchasing a copy is advised to register by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope (or two international reply coupons) to: Toybox Orders, c/o 61 Elgar Avenue, Tolworth, Surrey KT5 9JP, England. Alternatively, you can add yourself to the reserve list by sending a blank e-mail to: *td_toybox-subscribe@listbot.com*.

Win a library!

Five copies of this month's audio release, *Dalek Empire: The Genocide Machine*, need to find their way to the CD players of five lucky readers, thanks to the generosity of Big Finish.

This new adventure finds the Seventh Doctor and Ace caught up in a deadly power struggle between Daleks and, um, librarians on the rainy world of Kar-Charrat.

To win, you'll need to tell us which *Doctor Who* TV story features the Dalek Supreme as depicted in this issue's preview to *The Genocide Machine*. Simple as that! Answers on a postcard marked 'WETWORKS WAS A SILLY TITLE ANYWAY' to the usual address please!


DOCTOR WHO
THE GENOCIDE MACHINE
A BRAND NEW FULL CAST AUDIO DRAMA
STARRING SYLVESTER McCOY AND SOPHIE ALDRED

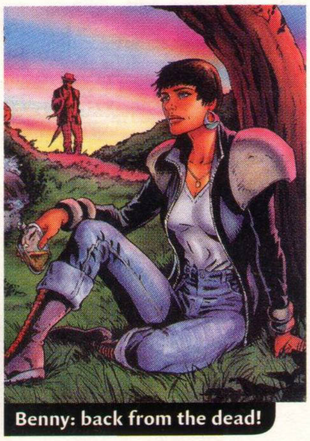
Big Finish to publish all-new Benny novels and audios

Bernice Summerfield rides again!

Much-loved books companion Professor Bernice Summerfield is to join the Seventh Doctor in a new *Doctor Who* audio adventure from Big Finish. Actress Lisa Bowerman – who has already brought the archaeologist to life in a series of audio adaptations of the Virgin *New Adventures* series – will star alongside Sylvester McCoy in *The Summoning*, scripted by Benny's creator Paul Cornell. But this is just one of many new outings for the intrepid Benny . . .

Just months after the *New Adventures* range was abandoned by Virgin, Big Finish have snapped up both the book and audio rights to the character. The company expects to publish all-new Benny novels and plays from September.

Big Finish producer Gary Russell – who also oversees the company's *Doctor Who* range – told **DWM**: "We were very proud of the run of Benny audios we did. After all, they were directly responsible for our landing the *Doctor Who* deal with BBC Worldwide! So we thought it would be a shame to consign the character to history. We've been waiting for the right time to relaunch Bernice, and with the co-operation of Paul Cornell, it's become possible to do that now.



Benny: back from the dead!

"Both Paul and I felt that the Virgin range had moved a long way from the original concept of the Benny novels – that 'science fiction has never been this much fun'. We want to recapture that sense of fun and give Benny a whole new lease of life as the uniquely entertaining character Paul intended. We hope to offer a series of exciting new adventures that will appeal both to Benny's most die-hard fans and those who lost track of her after she left the *Doctor Who* novels."

Joining Bernice and Wolsey the cat will be her mentor, Irving Braxiatel. Bernice will set up home on the Braxiatel Collection, a small planetoid which Braxiatel is converting into a museum of galactic art and history.

The series will launch with a short story collection overseen by Paul Cornell. Among the writers for this collection, provisionally titled *The Dead Men Diaries* after Benny's famously unpublished book, are *The Curse of Fatal Death* writer Steven Moffat, established Benny novelists Kate Orman and Dave Stone and a number of new authors. These stories will be short vignettes looking at Benny and her life, often through the eyes of the people she encounters, and is intended to provide an ideal 'jumping on' point for those unfamiliar with Benny's exploits.

October will see the publication of the first new novel, *Professor Bernice Summerfield and the Doomsday Manuscript* by Justin Richards, with Jacqueline Rayner's *Professor Bernice Summerfield and the Squire's Crystal* following in December.

A new series of audio plays featuring Lisa Bowerman will be issued bi-monthly from November, alternating with the novels. While previous Bernice audio adventures have been adaptations of Virgin novels – the final adaptation, *Dragons' Wrath* is due in the spring – these new stories will be specifically written for audio.

Outside the Spaceship

What Doctor Who's movers and shakers are up to . . .

Compiled by Dominic May

Television **Tom Baker** was the subject of *This is Your Life* on 18 March, in a specially scheduled edition following the début of *Randall & Hopkirk (Deceased)* in which he plays ghost Wyvern. Michael Aspel sprung the surprise on 6 March while he was signing his book *The Boy Who Kicked Pigs* at the Kingston branch of Waterstones bookshop. Baker is optimistic of R&H's success; "I adore the madness of it all. I'd love to make another TV series and this might be the springboard for me. There must be more parts out there for someone of 65. I'm still able to get around. I was stroking my legs an hour ago – because there was no one else around to do it – and thinking, 'you've been good to me, you boys.'" **Paul McGann**, who was the narrator of recent BBC2 documentary series *The Secret World of Year 3*, said of his career recently: "The funny thing is that it is a fact of life when you are a performer that people always want you to reprise the good thing you did last year . . . That's why I'm sparing with television and why I try to do things that by and large are different from the last thing I did."

Louise Jameson and her Sevateem colleague **Leslie Schofield** are set to leave *EastEnders* around August. **Mary Tamm** makes a guest appearance as Lyn Baker in the BBC's upcoming daytime soap *Doctors* playing Christopher Timothy's former lover. **Bonnie Langford** was the subject of BBC2's *Esther* on 25 February. She now modestly advertises herself as "no more ringlets, no more squeaky brat . . . just pure talent." **Chris Clough** is the producer of *Black Cab*, a series of 10-minute short films for BBC2 all set in the back of a London taxi, which were due to be completed by the end of March. He describes the project as "a series of snapshots of contemporary Britain."

Film **Tom Baker** claims he declined to appear in the upcoming movie of *The Lord of the Rings* because it would have meant him having to uproot himself to New Zealand for 18 months. **Sylvester McCoy** plays the Tall Man, one of the inhabitants of a cursed island, in new feature film *Mumbo Jumbo* which has been shooting in Germany and the UK.

Miscellaneous **Frazer Hines** will shortly have a feature in *OK! Magazine* devoted to his home and horse stud. **Janet Fielding** has left Marina Martin Associates where for the last few years she has represented **Paul McGann**, reportedly to pursue a writing career.

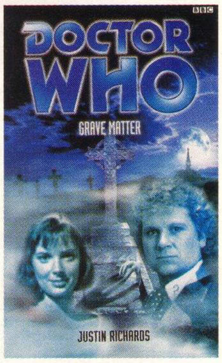
Obituaries **Donald Cotton**, writer of *The Myth Makers* and *The Gunfighters*, died at the end of January. A full tribute will appear in **DWM** 291. **Kenneth Waller**, who was Hedges in *The Invisible Enemy*, recently died aged 72. **Reginald Jessup**, who was a servant in *The Massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Eve* and Lord Savar in *The Invasion of Time*, died on 1 February.

Collectors' Heaven

April **Audio drama** **Doctor Who: Dalek Empire: The Genocide Machine** by Mike Tucker [Seventh Doctor & Ace] *Big Finish* **Novel** **Doctor Who: Coldheart** by Trevor Baxendale [Eighth Doctor] BBC Books **Novel** **Doctor Who: Verdigris** by Paul Magrs [Third Doctor, Jo & Iris Wildthyme] BBC Books

May **Video** **Doctor Who: The Edge of Destruction and The Pilot Episode: An Unearthly Child** [First Doctor, Susan, Ian & Barbara] *BBC Video* **Audio drama** **Doctor Who: Red Dawn** by Justin Richards [Fifth Doctor & Peri] *Big Finish* **Novel** **Doctor Who: The Space Age** by Steve Lyons [Eighth Doctor] BBC Books **Novel** **Doctor Who: Grave Matter** by Justin Richards [Sixth Doctor & Peri] BBC Books **Non-fiction** **Jon Pertwee: The Biography** by Bernard Bale *André Deutsch*

DOCTOR WHO
RED DAWN
A BRAND NEW FULL-CAST AUDIO DRAMA
STARRING PETER DAVISON AND NICOLA BRYANT



June **Audio drama** **Doctor Who: The Spectre of Lanyon Moor** by Nicholas Pegg [Sixth Doctor, Evelyn & the Brigadier] *Big Finish* **Audio drama** **Doctor Who: The Ghosts of N-Space** [Third Doctor & Sarah] *BBC Worldwide* £tba **Soundtrack CD** **Doctor Who: Galaxy 4** [First Doctor, Vicki & Steven] *BBC Worldwide* £tba **Novel** **Doctor Who: The Banquo Legacy** by Andy Lane & Justin Richards [Eighth Doctor] BBC Books **Novel** **Doctor Who: Heart of TARDIS** by Dave Stone [Second and Fourth Doctors, Romana] BBC Books **Non-fiction** **Doctor Who: Pocket Essentials** by Mark Campbell *Pocket Essentials*

July **Video** **Doctor Who: Time-Flight** [Fifth Doctor, Nyssa & Tegan] *BBC Video* **Audio drama** **Doctor Who: Winter For the Adept** by Andrew Cartmel [Fifth Doctor & Nyssa] *Big Finish* **Novel** **Doctor Who: The Ancestor Cell** by Peter Anghelides & Stephen Cole [Eighth Doctor] BBC Books **Novel** **Doctor Who: Prime Time** by Mike Tucker [Seventh Doctor & Ace] BBC Books

August **Audio drama** **Doctor Who: Dalek Empire: The Apocalypse Element** by Stephen Cole [Sixth Doctor & Evelyn] *Big Finish* **Audio drama** **Doctor Who: The Ghosts of N-Space** [Third Doctor & Sarah] *BBC Worldwide* £tba **Soundtrack CD** **Doctor Who: The Highlanders** [Second Doctor, Ben, Polly & Jamie] *BBC Worldwide* £tba **Soundtrack CD** **Doctor Who: The Macra Terror** [Second Doctor, Ben, Polly & Jamie] *BBC Worldwide* £tba **Novel** **Doctor Who: The Burning** by Justin Richards [Eighth Doctor] BBC Books **Novel** **Doctor Who: Imperial Moon** by Christopher Bulis [Fifth Doctor & Turlough] BBC Books

September **Video** **Doctor Who: The Talons of Weng-Chiang** [Fourth Doctor & Leela] *BBC Video* **Audio drama** **Doctor Who: The Fires of Vulcan** by Steve Lyons [Seventh Doctor & Mel] *Big Finish* **Novel** **Doctor Who: Casualties of War** by Steve Emmerson [Eighth Doctor] BBC Books **Novel** **Doctor Who: Festival of Death** by Jonathan Morris [Fourth Doctor, Romana II & K9] BBC Books **Non-fiction** **Doctor Who: Regeneration** by Philip Segal with Gary Russell *Harper Collins*

BBC Books novels RRP £5.99
BBC videos RRP £12.99 (except where stated)
Big Finish audio dramas on double CD (£13.99; mail order and specialist shops only) or double cassette (£9.99)

A letter from the Doctor

How thrilling it is that **Doctor Who Magazine** has decided to produce a special issue all about my time as Doctor Who. I can vividly remember when that first issue was published – which is quite unlike me, I rarely remember anything pleasurable – and all the tearing round the country we did to tell people about it. People still bring me copies of that very first one to sign, with those little stickers on the front, and it always brings back such happy memories.

It's so extraordinary that we're all still here and having such fun. I owe the magazine such a debt of gratitude as it keeps everyone's love for *Doctor Who* alive, and without love, we are all nothing. What the magazine does so well is capture that mix of the serious and the silly the television series always had. That's very hard to do – no-one seems to be able to do it on television any more, so it is a constant delight to me that the writers of a magazine can do it so well!

I'm suddenly so busy at the moment. I'm told that by the time this edition is published I'll have made my debut in the new series of *Randall and Hopkirk*. I'm a ghost – some might say that's very appropriate – and it's all very well done. No-one seems to want me to play butchers or bankers these days, which is perhaps why, later in the year, you'll be able to catch me as King of the Elves in the *Dungeons and Dragons* film. I've also been approached regarding two different versions of Merlin in two Arthurian series that are being planned. I've had some nice lunches to talk about those. One is set in the modern day and is quite clever. As Merlin I have to go to a railway station and ask for a Day Return to Tintagel. We might have some fun with that.

Your editor, Gary, suggested to me that I'm only being offered roles where I have to stride about wearing a big coat . . . Ha-ha! Perhaps I should take out an advertisement in the back of *The Stage*: "Tom Baker: Big Coat Parts a Speciality."

Happy times and places,

Tom Baker

Editors Gary Gillatt
Alan Barnes
Design Peri Godbold

Production Mark Irvine
Chief Sub Jason Quinn
Managing Editor Alan O'Keefe
Managing Director Miles Stevens-Hoare

Thanks to Tom Baker, Richard Bignell, David Brunt, Andy Marriott, Richard Molesworth, Jac Rayner, Justin Richards, Adrian Rigelsford, Gary Russell, Martin Wiggins, Harlequin Minatures, BBC Books, BBC Video and Big Finish

Tom Baker and Dalek cover photograph with thanks to Tree Root Productions Ltd

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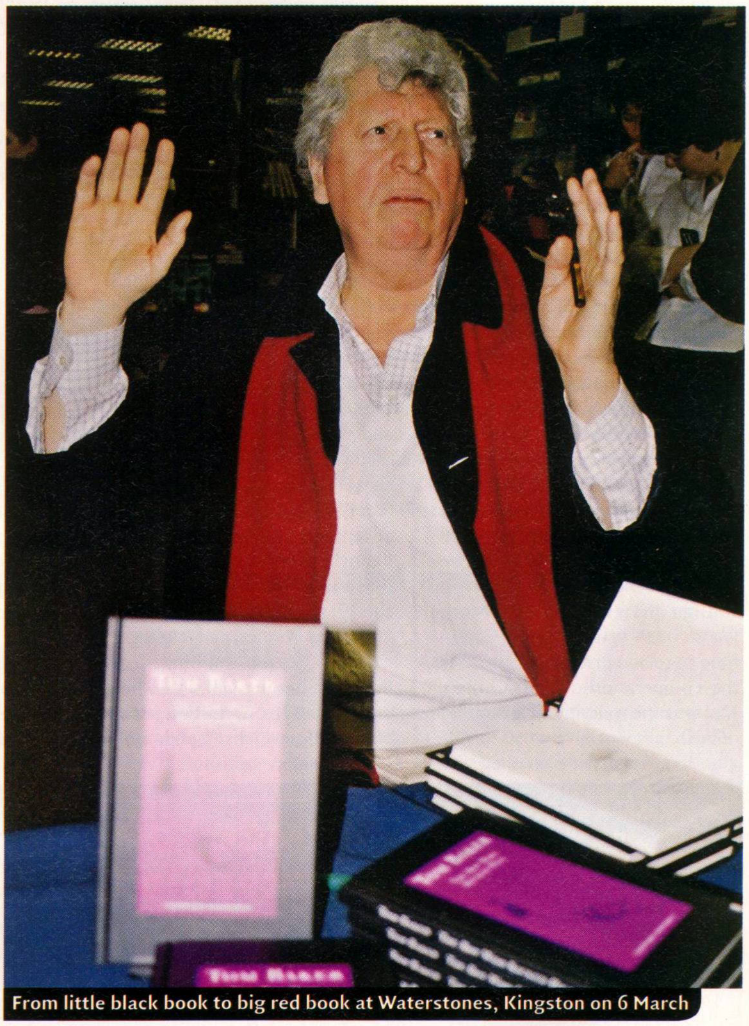
Timelines

Send your letters to Timelines, DWM, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 5UJ, or e-mail us at dwm@panini.co.uk – marking your letter 'Timelines' in the subject line, and don't forget to include your full name. No subscription or other enquiries by e-mail.



From little black book to big red book at Waterstones, Kingston on 6 March

WHAT A LIFE!

It began on a sunny Monday afternoon at the Kingston branch of Waterstones. I was minding my own business with a friend, about to get a few copies of *The Boy Who Kicked Pigs* signed by the author – for friends, obviously – and who should turn up but bloody Michael Aspel! Rushing to Teddington Studios, I managed to procure two tickets to see the recording of *This Is Your Life*: the subject, Mr Tom Baker.

Of course, most of the UK readers of **DWM** will have seen this programme by now, but I'd still like to share a few memories of a very memorable day!

On arrival my friend Neil and I decided that we looked like the only *Doctor Who* fans in the audience (the rest being senior citizens on a free night out who left after the warm-up man finished his spot – mind you, he nearly forced me to leave as well!) We endeavoured to savour what was destined to be a unique experience. The show itself was highly entertaining and Tom seemed genuinely happy to be there, and talked at great length. He described happiness as something that can go away, and spoke fondly of his new happiness: his wife Sue. He also reminisced about being *Doctor Who* and how it pleased him to make so many children happy.

Stepping through the double doors right at the end of the show came Tom's son, Piers, who had flown over from New Zealand to be there. This was a very touching moment which left Tom, for once, speechless!

Much more material was recorded than the BBC will have time to transmit. Some other comments by Tom will also have to be cut for a pre-watershed transmission!

I'm not sure if it will have made it to the final edit, but our favourite moment came after mention of Tom's training as a monk, when he exclaimed loudly, "Oh no! You haven't got *God* here have you?!" Neil and I looked at each other and we decided that, perhaps, they had!

Peter Rae
via e-mail

After that appropriate opening to this issue's *Timelines*, we have to get back to the subject of this season's great debate: those wacky BBC Books . . .

LIKE IT OR LOSE IT

I am fed up after reading another letter criticising BBC books for not being 'real' *Doctor Who*. Suzanne Macey's letter in **DWM** 288 left me fuming with anger. Will someone please show me this cast iron document laying down exactly what *Doctor Who is* and *isn't* about. For too long now the BBC books line of Eighth Doctor novels has been dismissed and condemned for its treatment of characters or its grim and gritty outlook, so often paraphrased as "depressing". What *Doctor Who* is 'about' is the subject of so much contradiction that any new work is bound to be criticised for not being 'real' or 'proper' *Doctor Who*. Compare *The Aztecs* with *The Happiness Patrol* and see how colourful and diverse the show can be. *Doctor Who* has the ability to tell any kind of story and communicate any kind of message. Yet it seems as though fandom is punishing authors for daring to innovate. If the early television producers had held the same opinion then *Doctor Who* would have ended when William Hartnell left.

Doctor Who changed its format with every regeneration. Would a fan from the sixties have recognised *Inferno* as the same programme had it not retained its title? *Doctor Who* is about change and to try and strangle its future with old fashioned ideas is to doom the programme to obscurity. New *Doctor Who* is exactly that: *new*. Authors may imitate the characteristics of a specific era but that is all it is – imitation. The TV series was the product of a different generation and if *Doctor Who* is to remain relevant it must not be constrained by its past popularity.

I hate to break the news to all those fans that despise the BBC books so much, but this is the *only* new *Doctor Who* in production that offers a continuing series of adventures. Big Finish productions and the Past Doctor novels both provide well-written, well-acted and well conceived adventures for the Doctor in all his incarnations but the Eighth Doctor novels are the only continuing new *Who*. If we do not lend our support to this range of books then the BBC may simply decide that producing original *Doctor Who* novels is no longer commercially viable. It is all very well to revel in the Doctor's glorious past through the video releases but if we allow *Doctor Who* to fade from the public eye then we may lose it all together.

If you want a good, old-fashioned *Doctor Who* adventure, watch a video. If you want a TV series for children then watch *Grange Hill*. However, if you want to read a well-written, entertaining and thought-provoking piece of original fiction then read the BBC books because in a few years time they'll be the good, old-fashioned *Doctor Who* that everyone is reminiscing about.

David Mills
via e-mail

A good argument, David, but we think it's worth pointing out that the BBC Eighth Doctor books do not represent the Doctor's *only* continuing run of new adventures – you'll find the latest episode of a different take on his life in any edition of **DWM**. Or perhaps the comic strip just isn't 'real' *Doctor Who* for you?

But back to the plot. Our next correspondent agrees with one of the main points made in David Darlington's article *The never-ending story* [**DWM** 287]. It was suggested that the problem with the Eighth Doctor books may not be that they push too hard at the boundaries of *Doctor Who*, but that – with so many of the same authors writing to their same bold, new vision for so many years, both for the BBC and Virgin – they are now simply not imaginative and innovative *enough*. So, how about that? Have we now reached a stage where we've seen it all before?

As a long standing (and that means ageing old git) fan of *Doctor Who*, I have to say that I'm disturbed by the way the series is handled by the authors of the Eighth Doctor range.

I had high hopes that the series was finding its voice with the introduction of Fitz, back at the start of last year. Indeed, for the first quarter of 1999 the books were all of a consistently high standard. But then the rot set in. The old Virgin gang appear to be influencing the product again. Since *Dominion* there hasn't been a truly pleasurable read in the Eighth Doctor range.

Have they completely forgotten that it should be *fun* to be in the company of the Doctor? Of course, there should be danger and shocks and adventure along the way, but above all else it should be fun!

The Doctor should be portrayed as someone you would want to spend time with, not some anguish-ridden, ineffectual wimp. Lessons should be learned from Virgin's handling of the range. They, too, tried to change many cherished elements of the series, which led, undeniably, to falling sales as readers became bored with the repetition and violence. Just how many times lately has the Eighth Doctor been captured, stripped naked and tortured? Far too often. I'm bored, I've read it all before folks. Can't we come up with any other ideas?

Can we at least have a run of novels where the reader can feel upbeat and positive at the end? Can *Doctor Who* be escapist again?

Andrew Clarkson
Dorset

On the other hand, we have the more succinct . . .

The Shadows of Avalon! Amazing stuff! The best thing I've read in years! Stop running poxy features on boring, stuck-in-the-past Big Finish audios and go back to giving the books the coverage they deserve, you w*nkers!

Paul Cornell is God!

Steve Wilson
via e-mail

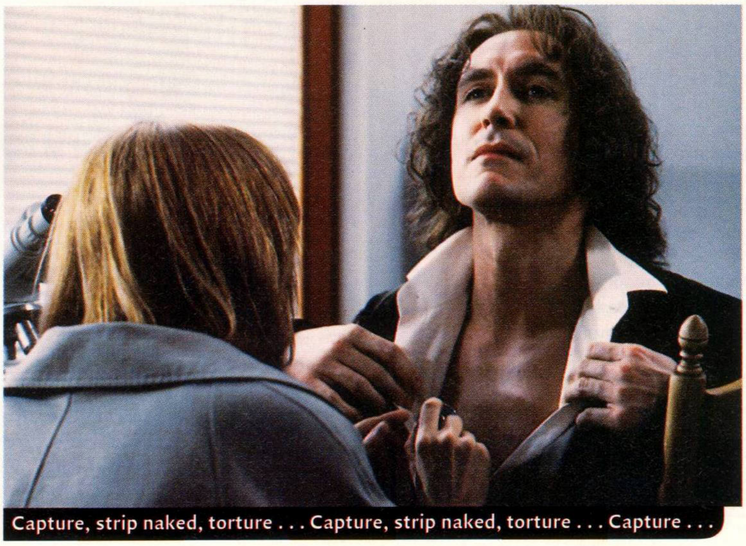
I have just read the editorial in **DWM** 288, and I must say that I cannot believe that people complain about the amount of coverage given to Big Finish productions of new *Doctor Who*.

After many years of fans trying to coerce the Beeb into supplying new *Who*, the BBC granted a license to Big Finish, who have gone on to provide a superb range of productions, and managed to get many past Doctors and assistants to return to their roles for our benefit. Is **DWM** expected to ignore this, or at very least play it down? What nonsense!

DWM has consistently provided well balanced coverage of all *Doctor Who*-related products. If anything, Big Finish need a big pat on the back for making it happen at all – and our support. Who knows, in a few years we may very well be seeing Gary Russell and company producing TV *Doctor Who* for the BBC. There is enough experience and knowledge within fandom to do it now, as Big Finish have proved.

Let's not get cynical now. The fans keep *Doctor Who* alive, the fans have resurrected it . . . but the fans can kill it too. It's a great time for *Doctor Who*. If you love the books but don't like the audios, then don't buy them. But please don't try to ruin things for the rest of us!

Paul Smith
Aberdeen



Capture, strip naked, torture . . . Capture, strip naked, torture . . . Capture . . .

A SHORT SCOTSMAN

Way back in **DWM** 285, we wondered if any readers had met real people named after *Doctor Who* characters. The letters are still coming in . . .

John Ince contacted us via e-mail to say: "When I first came to university, I had a brief fling with a Leela – who disappointingly didn't have a leather leotard. Then I did a very good course in stage lighting led by someone called Ace, who, confounding all my mental associations, was a short, dark-haired Scotsman!"

The alliterative **Simon Scott** of Scarborough writes: "In 1988 I worked as an assistant in a seafront amusement arcade. It was a deeply tedious summer job, but one day something happened that had me laughing for hours.

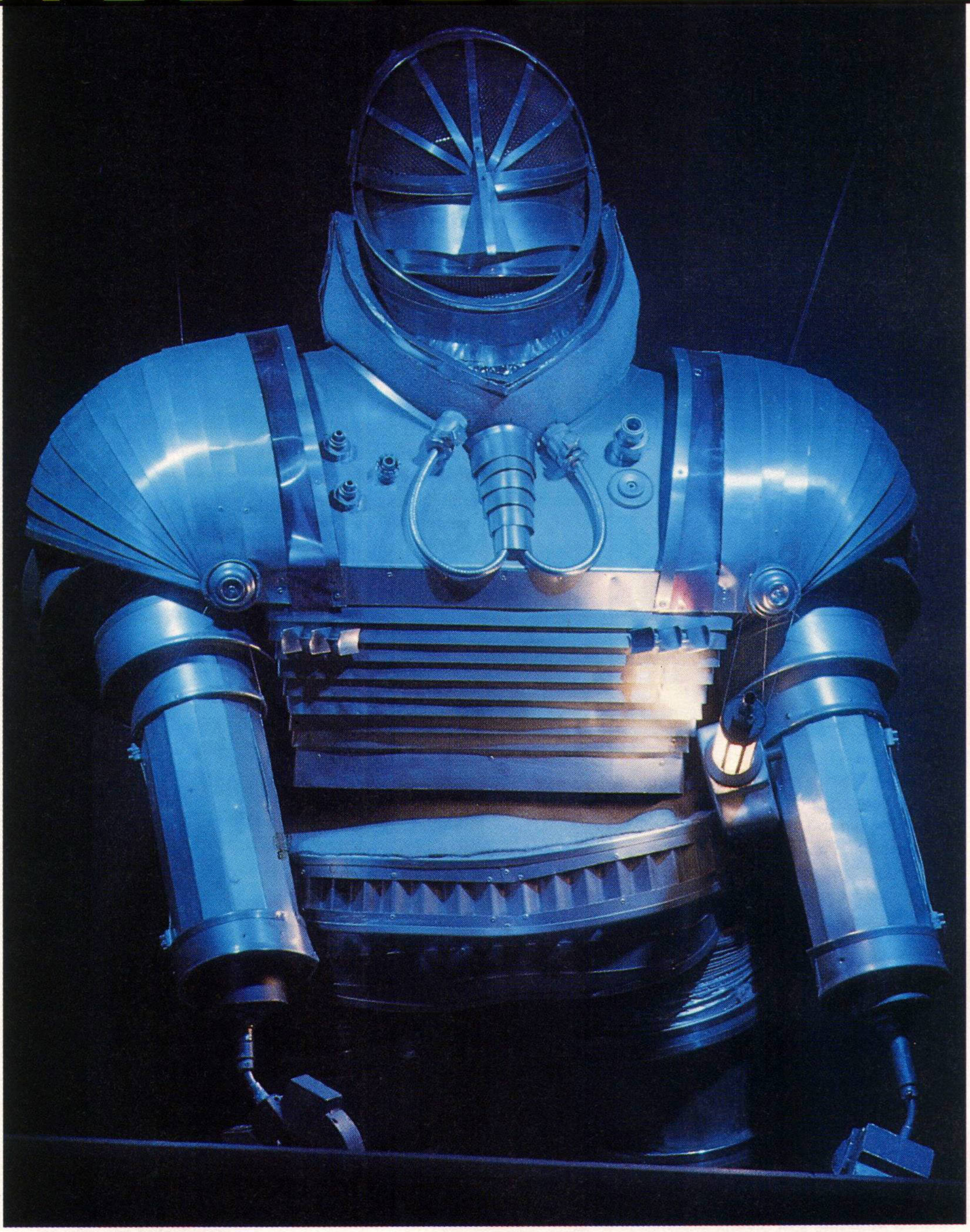
"It was a busy afternoon with lots of problems and, amid all the mayhem, three aggressive toddlers were running amok around the video games. They all seemed to be the same age – about six, I'd guess – and I think they must have been triplets, because they were all wearing identical dungarees. The only difference – and this should have been a clue to what was coming – was that one set of dungarees was purple, one red and one yellow. They'd have looked adorable if they hadn't been profoundly annoying.

"Then . . . their frantic-looking young mother, desperate to get her tartrazine-charged offspring under control, called for them by name across the busy arcade . . .

"'Tegan! . . . Adric! . . . Nyssa!' she shrieked.

"I very nearly died laughing."

Robot



Tears, Sarah Jane? While there's life, there's – a whole new body to travel the universe in (labour relations permitting). Andrew Pixley revisits Tom Baker's debut!

PART ONE

Overcoming sentries, guard dogs, wire fences and metal doors, something with robotic claws breaks into a Ministry of Defence weapons research station to steal a file marked 'Top Secret'. At UNIT HQ, the Brigadier – who has placed the newly-regenerated Doctor into the charge of Dr Harry Sullivan – informs Sarah that plans for a new disintegrator gun have been stolen. Sarah asks the Brigadier to get her a visitor's pass to enter Thinktank, a scientific research establishment which she wants to write a feature about. Meanwhile, the Doctor, behaving erratically, has made for the TARDIS, overpowering Harry in an effort to leave the Earth. Sarah and the Brigadier arrive just in time to intrigue him with news of the mysterious theft.

Another robbery – this time of electronic components – is made by the same powerful being. Having settled on a new outfit, the Doctor joins Harry and the Brigadier at the scene of the crime, estimating that the intruder weighs a quarter of a ton. Realising that the next component needed to put together the disintegrator gun is a focusing generator, UNIT places a guard on Emmett's Electronics in Essex. However, the hefty intruder burrows in and steals the part.

Sarah visits Thinktank, where she meets both its Director, Hilda Winters, and her aide, Arnold Jellicoe. She is curious about an apparently abandoned room previously used by Professor JP Kettlewell, a robotics expert who left Thinktank following a row; the room shows signs of recent use. Sarah visits the bumbling Kettlewell, who intends to work on alternative technology; he claims that no-one at Thinktank would be able to continue with his work. Tricking her way back into Thinktank, she makes for the deserted workroom. Inside, she is confronted by a massive robot. "Who are you? Why are you here?" it demands, advancing towards her . . .

PART TWO

Sarah runs out of the room, encountering Miss Winters. She is introduced to Experimental Prototype Robot K-1 – an advanced tool designed to carry out tasks hazardous to man. To prove its harmless nature, Miss Winters orders the robot to kill Sarah – but its prime directive programming forbids it to carry out her command. The display upsets Sarah, who believes the machine is experiencing pain. Miss Winters blackmails Sarah into keeping quiet about the robot by suppressing news of her break-in. Once Sarah has gone, Miss Winters and Jellicoe program the robot to kill Joseph Chambers MP, whom they describe as an enemy of humanity.

As the Doctor considers what could have conducted the robberies, Sarah returns to UNIT HQ to tell them about the robot. The Brigadier has too little information to raid Thinktank, but it is decided that Harry could be planted there as an inside man. The Doctor and Brigadier visit Kettlewell, who says that the robot he built was destroyed. News arrives of the death of Chambers, whose safe has been broken into with the aid of the disintegrator gun. The Brigadier discovers that many of the Thinktank scientists are members of the Scientific Reform Society, a minor political group dedicated to reforming the world along logical lines. Sarah visits their headquarters, where she learns that the SRS' aims ultimately add up to the control of all mankind.

The robot arrives at Kettlewell's in a state of severe distress. The Doctor and the Brigadier visit Thinktank, where Miss Winters claims that the robot became unstable after its encounter with Sarah – and it has since been melted down. Back at UNIT HQ, the Doctor receives a call from Kettlewell, who says that the disturbed robot is with him; Miss Winters and Jellicoe arrive as he completes the call. The Doctor arrives at Kettlewell's to find his laboratory deserted – and is attacked by the robot, which believes him to be a threat to humanity. Exhausted, the Doctor falls to the floor as the colossus looms up over him . . .

PART THREE

Having found a note left by the Doctor, Sarah arrives at Kettlewell's accompanied by RSM Benton and several UNIT troops. Sarah's presence confuses the robot which escapes, walking past the UNIT gunfire. They find both the unconscious Doctor and Kettlewell, who had been bound and gagged by Miss Winters and Jellicoe. Kettlewell recalls that he was persuaded to join the SRS in the past; Sarah asks him to attend the next SRS meeting, so that she can infiltrate it. Now awake, the Doctor learns that the

Mixing it: the Doctor and Harry

papers stolen from Chambers' safe contained destructor codes for, and the locations of, the superpowers' weapons stockpiles.

Aghast when he hears that Sarah has gone off with Kettlewell, the Doctor races to the SRS meeting, where Miss Winters has told her followers that they will form a new scientific élite – with the help of both the robot and Kettlewell, who believes that the SRS can halt pollution of the environment. UNIT are close behind the Doctor and a gun battle ensues; Miss Winters, Kettlewell, Jellicoe and the robot escape, taking the captive Sarah with them. The Brigadier receives a report from Harry to say that the Thinktank staff are evacuating to 'the Bunker' – just before Jellicoe surprises Harry and renders him unconscious.

The Bunker is an atomic shelter built in the 1960s; UNIT forces soon surround it, but it is heavily defended and Miss Winters is holding Harry and Sarah hostage inside. Threatening to use the destructor codes, she sends the robot out to deal with UNIT. The Doctor's attempts to breach the Bunker are halted by the emergence of the robot, which uses the disintegrator gun to obliterate a tank. It issues a harsh ultimatum: "Go now, or I will destroy you all!"

PART FOUR

Horrified to learn that Miss Winters is actually prepared to fire the world's missiles after all, Kettlwell is able to abort the countdown sequence. Harry and Sarah manage to free their bonds and overpower Jellicoe – and, with Kettlewell, make their way out of the Bunker. As they emerge to confusion, Kettlewell is fired on by the robot; distressed, the robot collapses. The Bunker is stormed by UNIT; Miss Winters and the SRS are captured, and the Doctor's speedy typing helps abort the destructor codes.

Sarah is about to leave the Bunker when she is confronted by the robot; the machine intends to carry out what it believes was Kettlewell's plan to launch the missiles. Benton recalls Kettlewell commenting on how a particular virus could attack the robot's living metal, and the Doctor and Harry set to work concocting this in Kettlewell's lab. In the Bunker, the robot plans to destroy all of 'corrupt' humanity – apart from Sarah, who has shown it kindness. When the missiles' fail-safe cuts in, the robot leaves the Bunker.

The Brigadier's attempt to use the captured disintegrator gun on the robot causes it to grow to a 50 foot-high titan, against which UNIT are powerless. With Sarah as its captive, the giant robot leaves her on a rooftop as it attacks UNIT. The Doctor and Harry arrive in Bessie with the metal virus and hurl it at the robot; the machine shrinks, rusting away to nothing.

Later, back at UNIT HQ, the Doctor attempts to cheer up Sarah – and refuses an invitation to dine at Buckingham Palace in order to demonstrate to the sceptical Harry that his old Police Box can indeed travel anywhere in time and space . . .

'It's a free cosmos!'

The robot has been destroyed – and, back at UNIT HQ, the Doctor tries to comfort Sarah . . .

DOCTOR You know, what you need is a change. How about a little trip in the TARDIS – I'm just off!
SARAH But you can't just go!
DOCTOR Why not? It's a free cosmos!
SARAH The Brigadier –
DOCTOR The Brigadier wants me to address the Cabinet, have lunch at Downing Street, dinner at the Palace, and write 17 reports in triplicate. Well I won't do it! I won't, I won't, I won't! [*He bangs his fist on a brick – hurts it, winces and sucks his knuckles*] Why should I?
SARAH Doctor, you're . . . you're being childish.
DOCTOR Well of course I am! There's no point in being grown up if you can't be childish sometimes . . .

From **Robot** Part Four
by Terrance Dicks

In Production

Re-recording in June 1974: Sarah (Elisabeth Sladen) tries to stop the Doctor (Tom Baker) leaving Earth

Doctor Who was to see many changes in 1973. Producer Barry Letts and script editor Terrance Dicks both wanted to move on from the show following broadcast of their problematic, little-seen adult drama series *Moonbase 3*. Dicks aimed to return to freelance writing; Letts, meanwhile, hoped to produce *Marie Curie* and other serials, including a John Lucarotti-scripted adaptation of CS Forester's *Lt Hornblower*. The departure of Katy Manning (who played companion Jo) in May, combined with the sudden death of Roger Delgado (who played the villainous Master) in June, had suggested to the show's star Jon Pertwee that it was time he, too, moved on.

Dicks invented a 'tradition' that each incoming script editor would commission his first script from his precursor – thus convincing his successor, Robert Holmes, to employ his services. Having been writing for the series since 1968, Holmes trailed Dicks in the post from October 1973. Holmes suggested a story exploring the principles which an intelligent robot might operate under. Dicks, meanwhile, wished to develop a storyline akin to the 1933 RKO monster movie *King Kong*; recalling a film critic commenting on how the audience always ended up on the monster's side, Dicks wanted his menacing robot to inspire sympathy. Women's Lib was also topical, and the writer was keen to make the main antagonist a woman.

Photos: BBC Video [15] Jaspal Cheema/John 'Chopper' Cordes [1]

IAN MARTER Harry Sullivan

Ian Marter had not set out to be an actor – but, upon leaving university in 1969, had applied for a job at the Bristol Old Vic and been amazed to be offered the post of assistant stage manager. This led him into stage acting, with work in the West End, in Dublin and at the Edinburgh Festival including *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Rivals*. His television work included Quentin Ingrams in *Crown Court* as well as appearances in *The Brothers*, *The Venturers* and *Play for Today*. During 1973 he had been extremely ill, close to death for two weeks. It was at the end of six months' recuperation that he was contacted by producer Barry Letts about the possibility of playing Harry Sullivan.

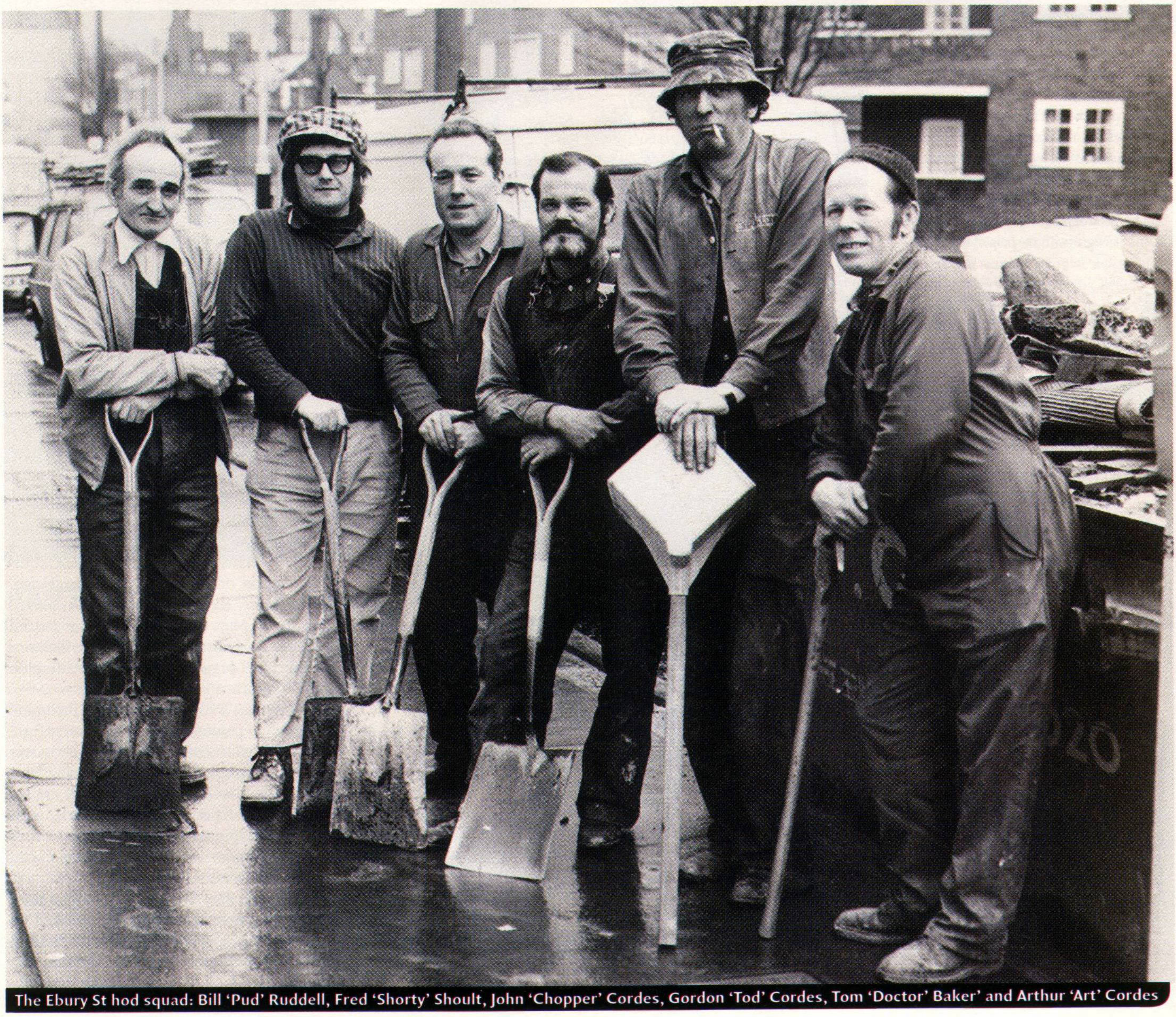
With the working title of *Robot* (documentation referring to the serial as *The Giant Robot* would apparently be issued later in the year), scripts were not commissioned until production was well underway; formal clearance arrived on Thursday 23 May. It was specified that the then script editor was being commissioned because the story required "knowledge of the serial's history".

Since the new Doctor was intended to be played by an older actor, a second male regular, Harry Sullivan, was introduced to handle action scenes (judging by early versions of *Planet of the Spiders*, the character may initially have gone under the name of 'Harry Sweetman'). This role was cast first, Letts having recalled Ian Marter, an actor he had first seen on stage in 1970; having previously offered Marter the role of Captain Mike Yates (which Marter had turned down), Letts had cast him as Andrews in 1972's *Carnival of Monsters*. The producer met Marter for lunch, whereupon he and Holmes outlined Harry; Marter agreed immediately to take the part. Marter's first costume fitting took place on Tuesday 26 February, with another on Tuesday 5 March. As with Elisabeth Sladen, who would continue to play Sarah Jane Smith, Marter was contracted to appear in a full season of 26 episodes on Tuesday 16 April.

For the Doctor, Letts was looking for somebody more eccentric than Pertwee. The producer saw many different actors to discuss how they would play the part, which was envisaged as a less action-oriented figure – a young man trapped in an old man's body. Ron Moody, who had been the first choice to replace Patrick Troughton in 1969, was again considered. Richard Hearne, an elderly comic whose clownish 'Mr Pastry' character had been very popular in films and television in the 1950s, visited Letts – but he seemed confused as to Letts' requirements, informing the producer that he thought the character of Pastry would make an inappropriate Doctor. Scots character actor Graham Crowden was a favourite; he liked the idea, but told Letts that he preferred the theatre and might want to leave the role after only a relatively short time. Peruvian-born comedy star Michael Bentine was very keen, due to his personal interest in science and the paranormal; talks with the former Goon halted when Bentine indicated that he also wanted script input, which the series' production schedule would not allow.

Another candidate was Jim Dale, a former TV host best known for the *Carry On . . .* films; Dale was flattered to be considered, but was committed for a year elsewhere. Comedy actor Bernard Cribbins (who had featured in the 1966 film *Daleks: Invasion Earth 2150 AD*) was interviewed, but rejected after outlining fighting skills which would not be required of the new Doctor. Letts' second choice became Fulton Mackay, a Scots actor who had played Dr Quinn in 1970's *Doctor Who and the Silurians*; Letts thought Mackay's Doctor would be similar to Troughton's in style. However, the first choice arrived out of the blue when a letter was sent to Letts' new boss, Bill Slater.

The letter was written by 40 year-old actor Tom Baker on the night of Sunday 3 February 1974, as he lay on a mattress in his one-room flat in Bourne Street, Pimlico. Up until Christmas, Baker had been appearing on stage in *Macbeth*, but



The Ebury St hod squad: Bill 'Pud' Ruddell, Fred 'Shorty' Shoult, John 'Chopper' Cordes, Gordon 'Tod' Cordes, Tom 'Doctor' Baker' and Arthur 'Art' Cordes

You're driving me, crazy: the Doctor and Sarah in Bessie

since then had been 'resting', working by day on a building site in Ebury Street. In an effort to secure more acting work, Baker decided to write a letter to Slater – who had directed him in *The Millionairess*, a BBC *Play of the Month* in 1972. The letter arrived on Tuesday 5, when Slater was meeting with Letts to discuss casting of the new Doctor; Slater was due to become Head of Drama Serials the following week. At the meeting, Slater put forward no firm ideas of his own, but agreed to consider it before a meeting the next day.

That night, Slater took the letter home, telling his wife, Mary Webster (an actress who also knew Baker), that Baker was begging for work. Suddenly, he realised that Baker could be right for the Doctor; his wife urged him to telephone Baker immediately, inviting him to Television Centre the next evening. At the Wednesday 6 meeting, Slater proposed Baker to Letts; since Letts had never seen Baker act, Slater suggested he ought to view *The Golden Voyage of Sinbad*, in which Baker starred as the villain; having been released in December 1973, the film was then showing at the Victoria. Letts returned to the production office and took Dicks out to the cinema for the afternoon; both were impressed by what they saw. That evening Baker met Slater, Letts and Shaun Sutton for a chat at the bar of the BBC Club; he had no idea what they had in mind. The following evening, Baker was invited back to Sutton's office, where Letts said they would like him to be the next Doctor Who. Astounded, Baker agreed. Letts asked him to suppress the news for about ten days; Baker went back to work on the building site, bursting to tell his workmates his news.

> **'I signed a contract before they asked me what I was going to do with it – so by then it was too late!'**
>
> **Tom Baker**

Pertwee's departure from *Doctor Who* was announced on Friday 8 February (he was supposed to have recorded an appearance on the BBC2 chat show *Just a Nimmo* the previous Sunday, but had not turned up). Several newspapers covered the story the next day. *The Sun* said that the BBC had found a replacement, but with details still to be worked out he could not be named; *The Times* said the successor would be revealed the following week. Baker's press call was at Television Centre on Friday 15 February; the actor attended the event with his friend, playwright Ted Whitehead, and was presented by Letts to reporters in the Bridge Lounge. Baker posed for photographs with co-star Sladen (then in rehearsals for *The Monster of Peladon*) and actor Pat Gorman, who was dressed in a Cyberman outfit from *The Invasion*; he was then taken to a small studio to be interviewed for both a BBC North West news programme and *Pebble Mill at One*. The *Evening Standard* was the first to carry the news; Baker's workmates at Ebury Street saw his picture on the front page. *The Times*, *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Mail* were among the papers running the news on Saturday 16, with the BBC confirming that the new Doctor would soon face the Daleks. In the coming days, the *Daily Express* ran a feature on Baker; over in *The Guardian*, Baker said he wanted to play the Doctor in an "individual way . . . although he has a human body he comes from somewhere else."

Baker was formally contracted to appear as Doctor Who (for a lower fee than Pertwee's) in an initial 26 episodes on Tuesday 19 February; the contract covered the period Saturday 20 April 1974 to Wednesday 14 May 1975. To discuss the new Doctor's character, Baker joined Letts, Dicks, Holmes and incoming producer Philip Hinchcliffe at the Balzac restaurant in Shepherd's Bush. Hinchcliffe had arrived at the BBC from ATV in November 1973 only to find that the series he had intended to produce had been cancelled, as a result of which he was trailing Letts. The team wanted a very different Doctor to Pertwee's; an eccentric, maybe looking something like the physicist Albert Einstein, maybe playing the violin like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's great fictional detective Sherlock Holmes. Believing that conventional heroes were out of fashion, Hinchcliffe wanted a rebellious, non-authority figure – a 'space gypsy' with Olympian detachment, whom he thought might appeal to student viewers. Holmes wanted a Doctor who appeared more alien (a factor which Hinchcliffe was not keen to stress), thought laterally and often seemed pre-occupied. Baker liked the notion of a Bohemian figure, an innocent with an air of surprise. From these discussions, Holmes developed a writers' guide which described the Doctor as a cross between Sherlock Holmes, heroic 1950s TV drama scientist Professor Bernard Quatermass and Irish dramatist George Bernard Shaw; he would be witty, bad-tempered and often secretive.

Robot's director was to be Christopher Barry, whose last *Doctor Who* work had been 1972's *The Mutants*; he since been employed on other BBC series including *Moonbase 3* and *The Carnforth Practice*. Costume designer James Acheson had previously handled *The Mutants*, *Carnival of Monsters*, *The Three Doctors* and *The Time Warrior*. Visual effects were contracted out to the Pinewood Studios-based Clifford Culley, whose firm had worked on both *Planet of the Daleks* and *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*. *Robot* would be the one and only *Doctor Who* serial to call upon the talents of set designer Ian Rawnsley and make-up designer Judy Clay.

Dicks discussed the storyline at length with both Barry and Holmes before starting work on the scripts. Reluctantly, he agreed to rework Part Four's plot; originally, after the evil Scientific Reform Society (SRS) has been defeated, Sarah was to leave the Bunker in her car, only to be attacked by the Robot – a scene which Holmes suggested could be eliminated as a cost-cutting measure.

The massive robot was to be achieved via the Colour Separation Overlay process (CSO). Consequently, it was decided that this would be the first *Doctor Who* to be shot entirely on videotape – using lightweight electronic cameras connected to a scanner van for location sequences, which had traditionally been shot on film (the technique was most often used by Outside Broadcast teams for sports coverage, but it had also been used for drama). The reason for this was that the picture would appear more stable once studio-shot CSO elements were

TOM BAKER Doctor Who

Tom Baker was born in Liverpool in 1934. His first desire to act was halted when his mother stopped him joining the Abbey Theatre in Dublin; instead, he spent some time as a monk in the Channel Islands. Leaving the holy order, Baker did his National Service in the Army Medical Corps and also served with the Merchant Navy. Following a troubled marriage, Baker took up acting as his chosen career, performing at York Rep in 1968 and making appearances at both the Edinburgh Festival and the National Theatre. Early television work included *Dixon of Dock Green* and *Softly, Softly: Task Force*, but his stage reputation led to his playing Rasputin in the film *Nicholas and Alexandra*; other movie work included *Vault of Horror* and the then-unreleased *The Mutations*. On television, he had also appeared in *Arthur of the Britons* and in the Universal TV movie *Frankenstein: The True Story*.

SCRIPTING The Doctor

Writer Terrance Dicks gave the new Doctor a very scatterbrained nature, akin to actor Tom Baker's own character; he surmised that if this initial craziness was felt unsuitable, it could be toned down and explained away as an after-effect of the Doctor's regeneration. Of the new Doctor's character, Dicks indicated his initial manner as being "brisk, hearty, hyper-active. He is running on overdrive, after his long rest". Investigating the break-in, he is seen "sitting cross legged on the grass, staring in absorption at something" and later is "stretched out in the back of the Landrover, his feet poking over the side. He has a general tendency to adopt gawky, sprawling attitudes". This is clarified Part Two's script where the Doctor is "stretched out at full length on a laboratory bench, like a crusader on a tombstone . . . It is a characteristic of his new incarnation that he always tends to lie, lean, hang or perch in some unlikely position, rather than sitting conventionally"; this body language trait was intended to differentiate Baker's Doctor from Jon Pertwee's. When the Brigadier deduces the target of the next theft, the Doctor "nods approvingly, like a master who has at last got a dimmish pupil to understand a simple theorem". During a discussion in the UNIT labs, "The Doctor, seemingly ignoring them, is building a tower from odds and ends . . . with child like pleasure". Later, he ignores the Brigadier while "gazing into space, rapt with thought".

"I think the nose is a definite improvement!"

added to location work, avoiding the mis-match of film and videotape which Letts recalled from *Carnival of Monsters* and *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*.

Robot was Dicks' own favourite *Doctor Who* script; he wanted to create a format which differed from the Pertwee serials, leaving his own personal stamp on the series. He paid particular attention to both the the Doctor's regeneration and continuity back to the previous incarnation. The first script indicated that "even when the change is complete, Doctor Who twists and writhes, muttering deliriously". These mutterings included references to the previous season's serials *The Time Warrior* and *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*: "Typical Sontaran attitude . . . Stop Linx . . . perverting the course of human history . . . I tell you Brigadier, there's nothing to worry about. The Brontosaurus is large, and placid . . . and stupid." The Brigadier and Benton both refer to their previous experience of the Doctor changing in *Spearhead From Space*, events also alluded to in the scene where the Doctor locates the TARDIS key: "He remembers the boots he is carrying . . . the key falls from the second boot onto the palm of his hand." In Part Three, the Doctor's pockets include cards showing both his "Freedom of the city of Scaro [sic]" and his status as an "Honorary Member of the Alpha Centauri Table Tennis Club".

To contrast the new Doctor against Pertwee's man of action, Dicks scripted a Part Three scene in which the Doctor betters an SRS thug: "Doctor Who tries to slip past the bouncer. The bouncer grabs for him but the Doctor isn't there. The bouncer trips and crashes to the ground. [The Doctor] seems to go to help the bouncer up. Immediately the bouncer takes a swipe at him, misses, trips over Doctor Who's foot and knocks himself out against the wall." Dicks noted that: "This incident is typical of the new Doctor's form of self defence, which might be described as 'Unintentional Aikido'. Doctor Who never seems to take any aggressive action, but his opponents invariably come to grief in some apparently accidental way."

One of Dicks' in-jokes was a reference to how sensitive Pertwee had been about the size of his nose in the scene where the Doctor looks into a mirror and remarks, "I think the nose is a definite improvement." The sequence where the Doctor finds his new outfit began with him "resplendent in a huge bearskin jacket", reappearing in "an even more eccentric costume" and finally adopting "what is basically his new costume". As the Doctor leaves with the Brigadier at the end of this scene, he was to comment: "Procrastination is the thief of time." The Doctor offers Sarah some sweets at the end of the serial – soon to become his trademark Jelly Babies.

Both Bessie and the sonic screwdriver were retained as links to the past; the remaining UNIT characters stayed constant, too. The Brigadier acquired a middle name in Part One, where he was described as "Brigadier Alastair Gordon Lethbridge Stuart" [*sic*]. Noting the gap left by the writing-out of Captain Yates, Letts had Sergeant Benton promoted to Warrant Officer One (Dicks' original drafts still gave Benton's rank as Sergeant).

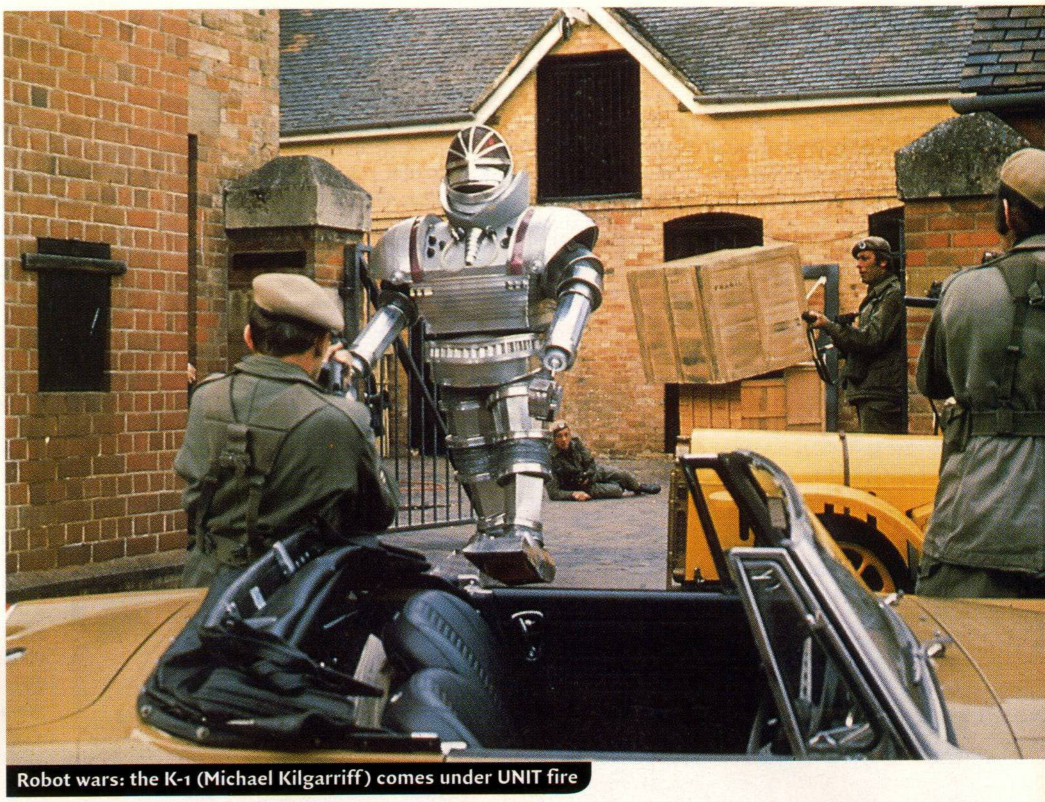
UNIT's Medical Officer, Lieutenant Harry Sullivan, was introduced as "a large burly young man in naval uniform. His social manner [is a] bit 'hearty' but he becomes calm and professional when at work"; later, when he is confronted by the Doctor, he is "full of professional good cheer" as his patient performs push-ups and touches his toes.

The supporting characters were well-outlined. Arnold Jellicoe was "a fussy elegant man in his thirties" who wears "elaborate, ultra-modern clothes", whereas Hilda Winters was "about the same age as Jellicoe . . . dressed fashionably but simply and might be a very superior executive secretary. Her manner, in contrast to that of Jellicoe, is utterly calm and relaxed, pleasant but a little cool". Originally, Professor JP Kettlewell, "a whiskery Einstein-type scientist . . . smoking a pipe", describes himself as living in a cottage. The SRS secretary, Short, was a "Himmler-like little man in rimless glasses. There is a gleam of fanaticism in his eyes." During Short's scene with Sarah, Dicks suggested that Sarah should wear either "a trouser suit or a mini skirt. Something to arouse disapproval in the ultra-conventional". At the end of the scene: "Short stands looking after her, now looking far more sinister than benevolent. He . . . picks up a phone."

The SRS meeting in Part Three was adapted by Dicks from an earlier script – *The Mauritius Penny*, a 1962 episode of *The Avengers* which he had co-authored with Malcolm Hulke. Here, an underground movement hopes to seize control of Western Europe, imposing stronger rule; leading lady Cathy Gale infiltrates

Late Spring 1974: Baker and Sladen pose at Wood Norton a meeting of uniformed anti-democracy fanatics, but is soon exposed as a spy.

Baker did not attend rehearsals for *Planet of the Spiders*, recording the regeneration alongside Pertwee in TC1 on Tuesday 2 April. On Friday 5, BBC producer David Hargreaves contacted Letts about a series of five 25-minute programmes, provisionally titled *Television Drama*, which was planned for broadcast in January/February 1975. He hoped to cover the production of a BBC drama series, and had picked *Doctor Who* – and *Robot* – as his subject.



Robot wars: the K-1 (Michael Kilgarriff) comes under UNIT fire

Outside Broadcast recording for *Robot* was scheduled to overlap with the final studio sessions on *Planet of the Spiders*; since the transformation scene had been recorded in the first studio session, Sladen was the only cast member who would be working on the two serials concurrently. Barry, therefore, arranged his shoot around Sladen's availability; she would be required for studio work on *Planet of the Spiders* at Television Centre on Tuesday 30 April and Wednesday 1 May.

The location for all outside recording was the BBC Engineering & Training Centre at Wood Norton in Hereford and Worcester. Previously a location for *Spearhead From Space*, this large estate contained a number of buildings to feature as the Bunker, Thinktank, Emmett's Electronics, the Meeting Hall and Kettlewell's home.

Recording began on Sunday 28 with several scenes set in Thinktank's grounds, including the arrivals of Sarah and Harry, the Doctor's visit with the Brigadier and Sarah sneaking back to Kettlewell's lab. A close-up shot of Sarah checking her pass for the National Institute for Advanced Scientific Research (dated 4 April) was recorded in the morning; she was seen in a mustard-coloured MG. The afternoon ended with a Part Two shot of the Doctor driving Bessie, Sarah returning to the Thinktank checkpoint in Part One and the Doctor and Harry in Bessie on a country road in Part Four. Baker was rather nervous at this point; he worked hard at the new character, but was very daunted to be a virtual unknown landing such a major role. Nonetheless, he struck up a drinking partnership with Brigadier actor Nicholas Courtney.

> **'I saw a playback of the first episode years later and thought, "My God! What did we do to Tom?"'**
>
> **Terrance Dicks**

Cast as Miss Winters was Patricia Maynard, then the wife of actor Dennis Waterman, whom Barry felt was suitably aloof. Colin Baker, known to the director from *The Carnforth Practice*, was considered for the role of Jellicoe – but ultimately the part went to Alec Linstead, whom Barry had cast as Sergeant Osgood in *The Dæmons*. Playing the Thinktank guard was Pat Gorman, who had played many minor roles since 1964. None of the gatehouse scenes saw Sarah driving her car; all shots of the vehicle in motion were to be recorded as cutaways later.

Monday 29 was spent recording Part Four scenes in a wooded area of the estate. Many of these shots had to be lined up very carefully, since they would have be integrated with CSO material in studio; these included UNIT's attack on the Bunker (for which Visual Effects provided several explosions) and backgrounds of Sarah being picked up by the Robot. Scenes recorded in the afternoon included the Doctor and the Brigadier determining how to reach the bunker, the realisation that Sarah is missing, Benton mentioning Kettlewell's metal virus, the UNIT team watching a soldier flee the bunker and the Brigadier speaking to Harry on the R/T.

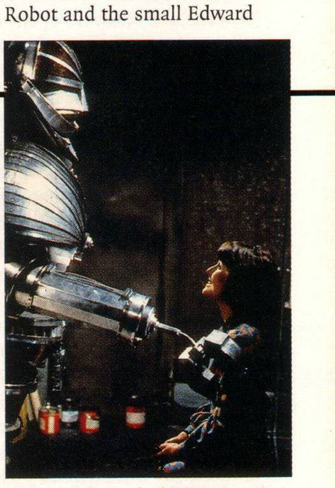
Production continued on Tuesday 30; simultaneously, *Planet of the Spiders* entered studio and contracts were issued for *Television Drama*. Again, most scenes were set in the wooded area for Part Four, including the return of the Doctor and Harry in Bessie and UNIT watching the robot's demise. A short Part Two scene in which UNIT examine the end of the tunnel followed. Further scenes involving the Doctor and Harry in Bessie were taped for Part Four, including shots indicating the Robot's point of view; a special high-angle periscope was used. More of these POV shots – featuring UNIT soldiers and one of the three UNIT Land Rovers – were recorded around the house. Background shots showing the Robot's demise were recorded at the end of the day.

Wednesday 1 saw Barry's crew start the day with a reshoot on the backgrounds for the dying robot. One of the newer buildings had been dressed as the Emmett's Electronics factory for a shot of UNIT setting up in Part One. Recorded next was a single shot of the UNIT convoy arriving outside the Bunker in Part Three, along with shots to be played back on the Bunker monitors in studio. Some shots of the Bunker doors opening in Part Three were recorded, plus CSO background shots of the house gable and UNIT attacking in Part Four and a remount of the Doctor driving along in Bessie for Part Two. The Part One scene showing the sentry entering the factory was recorded in an out-building. Finally a night shot of the Government Establishment break-in was recorded for Part One; this required the use of a dog, which failed to act on cue.

On Thursday 2 Sladen rejoined the cast, now swelled by the arrival of the tall Michael Kilgarriff (previously the Cyberman Controller in *The Tomb of the Cybermen* and an Ogron in *Frontier in Space*) as the Robot and the small Edward

SCRIPTING The Robot

Terrance Dicks wanted the large, powerful figure of the Robot, unaware of its own strength, to be softened by feelings for Sarah – echoing film ape King Kong's responses to Fay Wray's character. Dicks decided to leave the Robot – "a massive seven-foot high metal figure. A special optical effect indicates when we are looking through the robot's eyes. We can also hear an electronic heartbeat" – largely unseen until Part One's conclusion, where it was described as "looking enormous as it stalks towards [Sarah] seen full frontal for the first time. It speaks in a tremendous, booming voice." In Part Two it lists its functions as including "The operation of exploration vehicles on alien planets!" When ordered to contravene its Prime Directive it "falls to its knees head bowed as if in agony". Where the Robot confronts the Doctor, Dicks noted it to be "surprisingly agile for its size (we hope)"; when attacked by UNIT soldiers it "picks up an enormous crate and hurls it at them". The disintegrator gun (also referred to as a 'lazer gun') was a "kind of massive sci-fi rifle". For the closing sequences, Dicks suggested that the giant robot should go on the rampage "enlarged by CSO . . . with model cars, buildings or even people". As it dies, the Robot was to be seen "curled in a foetal attitude".

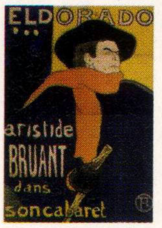


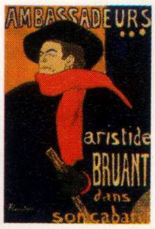
Burnham (formerly Professor Watkins in *The Invasion*) as Kettlewell. Burnham made a number of suggestions regarding Kettlewell, including the Professor's wild hair and thick spectacles; some of his more camp excesses would be curbed later on.

Recording began with Part One shots of a UNIT sentry at the factory vault (a prop hurriedly erected when Barry was denied permission to shoot at the entrance to an underground studio). This was followed by shots of Sarah arriving at Thinktank in Part One; Sladen was doubled by Elizabeth Cassidy in shots showing the car in motion. The scenes showing UNIT protecting Emmett Electronics were recorded next. The Robot first featured in the afternoon, much of which was devoted to a couple of short set-pieces – the first being the Part Three escape of SRS personnel, plus the Robot, from the Meeting Hall in a horse box. Sladen recorded 'wild tracks' of Sarah's calls for help from the roof in Part Four, which would be dubbed onto other scenes later. The remainder of the day was spent on scenes outside Kettlewell's House for Parts One and Three – the last shots being UNIT's attack on the Robot after it has burst out of the (dummy) door. By this time, Kilgarriff was finding it difficult to breathe, and almost collapsed during the take; after this first day in the costume, he could barely stand, and was glad of the break.

COSTUME The new Doctor

Producer Barry Letts wanted the new Doctor's image to be a contrast to the previous model's dandified appearance. Both he and actor Tom Baker favoured a Bohemian look; Baker suggested a hat. Baker was taken to a costume house, trying on many different outfits in a bid to find something which looked more eccentric than flamboyant. Costume designer James Acheson also consulted incoming producer Philip Hinchcliffe, later realising that he had been subconsciously influenced by two 1892 lithographs by French painter Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec – *Aristide Bruant dans son cabaret*, which show a music hall star in a red scarf and fedora. Baker liked the idea of a scarf, and Acheson recalled a scarf which an elderly lady called Begonia Pope had knitted for freelance props builder Alastair Bowtell. Acheson supplied Pope with a mass of wool accordingly, and Pope – delighted to be working for the BBC – used nearly all of it, producing an incredibly long item. Baker and Acheson both felt that the Doctor should have a longer coat, but this was vetoed and a red jacket used instead. Baker also sported woollen trousers, a paisley cardigan, a checked shirt and a striped tie.





The Brigadier (Nicholas Courtney), Harry (Ian Marter) and the Doctor trail a very unusual burglar

Morning recording on Sunday 5 began with more break-in sequences for Part One, this time showing the Robot's hands ripping through an electrified fence. Scenes of UNIT investigating were recorded next, followed by more establishing shots of Emmett's Electronics. The crew then moved to another part of the centre, where Rawnsley's hastily-erected 'vault' had been redressed as the Bunker's entrance. The sequences at the end of Part Three of UNIT arriving, being attacked by machine-gun nests and attempting to reason with Miss Winters were recorded here, along with a few shots for the start of Part Four.

Monday 6 was also spent around the Bunker and the adjoining wooded area for Parts Three and Four scenes. Scenes included the Doctor using his sonic screwdriver on the Bunker's door (a hot blade inside was used to cut through the plastic prop door), monitor shots showing UNIT advancing, UNIT falling back as the Robot emerges and the attack by an armoured tank. This last shot was achieved on location by means of a locked-off camera and a foreground miniature; the tank in question, an Action Man toy accessory, was made to 'vanish' via a roll-back-and-mix effect. Letts had insisted that Barry use this method, which turned out to be very disappointing. The Doctor and Harry's departure in Bessie was recorded next, then the roll-back-and-mix shot used for Kettlewell's death. Much of the afternoon was spent on CSO background shots for Part Four, including point-of-view shots of Sarah as the Robot picks her up. A Part One shot of a helicopter was captured between other effects shots (Dicks' script had suggested the use of a stock shot here), followed by a UNIT soldier fleeing the Bunker in Part Four and a remount of a UNIT scene from Sunday 29. The destruction of the machine gun nests was the last scene to be recorded. Because of problems arising from a scene shifters' strike, Barry had provisionally booked Tuesday 7 as a further shooting day, but surviving documentation seems to indicate that nothing was actually recorded.

Friday 10 May saw a readthrough of the serial, apparently filmed for *Television Drama*, at St Nicholas Church Hall in Chiswick. Rehearsals proper for the first two episodes commenced on Monday 13. The regular cast were now settling down; still a nervous loner, Baker established himself as a star in rehearsals. Fearful that the scripts might appear dull, both he and Barry took every opportunity to inject freshness – the gag where the Doctor breaks a brick in karate style, much ad-libbing in his first scenes with Sarah and a lot of business with the long scarf (measuring a hole which the Robot has made, and picking up pliers at Thinktank). Joining the cast at this point was Timothy Craven as Short (previously a guard in *Frontier in Space* and Robinson in *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*), whom Barry had used in *Paul Temple*.

Unfortunately, studio recording was disrupted. *Robot*'s first studio session, covering Parts One and Two, was set to run over Tuesday 21 and Wednesday 22 May in TC3; as with all four sessions, taping was due to run between 7.30 and 10.00pm. As it turned out, the scene shifters' industrial action meant that no recording took place on Tuesday 21. Letts rapidly arranged for a remount, with Barry assembled a list of scenes which could easily be recorded the following evening. A stepladder had been left erected in the Kettlewell's lab set which – presumably to avoid a clash over demarcation of labour – the production team did not dare move, and attempted to shoot around it instead.

Some technically demanding shots were recorded on the evening of Wednesday 22. The OB sequence of the sentry being attacked in Part One was played back into studio on a monitor, reflected off a disco mosaic mirror and re-recorded to give the Robot's distorted point of view. Long dummy arms of the Robot were used to show the break-in of the Government Premises. A locked-off camera was employed during the next sequence: the Doctor trying on various new costumes, emerging from the TARDIS as a Viking, the King of Hearts and a Pierrot clown before adopting his regular outfit. The scene showing Sarah, Miss Winters and Jellicoe in the empty Thinktank room was recorded next, followed by the two scenes in the factory vault; here, both CSO and a foreground miniature helped give the impression of the Robot's hand breaking through the floor. Sarah's visit to Kettlewell's was acted out before Kilgarriff was readied to perform the Thinktank sequences bridging Parts One and Two. Part Two material recorded comprised the Doctor and the Brigadier calling in at Kettlewell's, Sarah's visit to the SRS, the Doctor's trip to Thinktank – and finally the Robot's attack on Chambers. Here, a CSO mask was placed onto the set wall; the image placed beyond it showed the Robot using the 'glowing' disintegrator gun, with a similar glowing effect conveying the destruction of Chambers' safe.

Due to the industrial dispute, the sets were left standing – and therefore John Noakes, Peter Purves and Lesley Judd found themselves presenting the following day's edition of children's magazine *Blue Peter* on the Doctor's lab set.

Rehearsals for Parts Three and Four were held on Friday 24 May. Very rapidly, Letts managed to reschedule the abandoned recording session for Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 June. Sets for Part One were re-erected in TC3 for Saturday 1, when the bulk of the episode was recorded. Very little material was salvaged from the earlier session; material which was not remounted included the theft from the Government Office, the Doctor's quick change routine and the Factory Vault scenes. The opening scene was recorded in a similar manner to the end of *Planet of the Spiders*, with that serial's regeneration shot edited in later. In his early scenes, Baker wore a version of Pertwee's *Spiders* costume, keeping the dark blue velvet jacket over his nightshirt for the remainder of the evening. During a later scene, Baker karate-chopped a pre-cut prop brick.

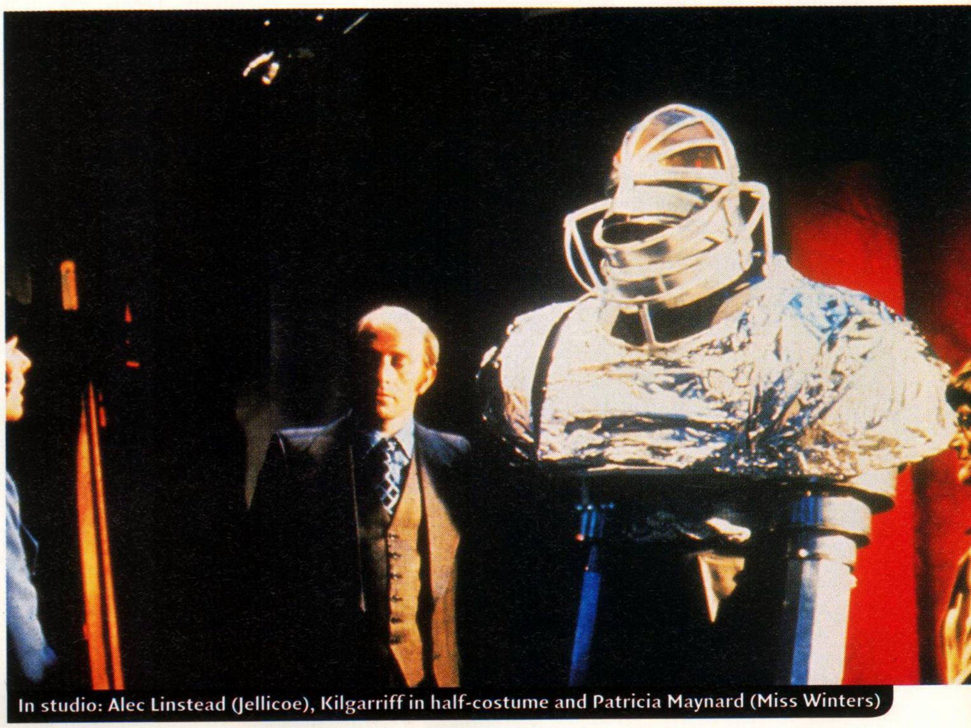
Most of Part Two was re-recorded on Sunday 2. Salvaged scenes included the Doctor's visit to Kettlewell's (with the offending ladder out of shot), Sarah's visit to the SRS and Chambers' killing. By now it was known that Part Two was over-running, so the OB sequence in which the Doctor and UNIT find the Robot's tunnel was moved into Part One. After re-recording Sarah's encounter with the Robot at Thinktank, Kilgarriff was removed from the costume; the suit was then used on set as an empty prop for a scene featuring Jellicoe and Miss Winters. Several monochrome photographs showing extra Walter Goodman as Joseph Chambers had been taken as props to be used in the serial. The sequence in which the Doctor leaves a note for Sarah differed from the scripted version; originally, the Doctor begins to write out the note in longhand, only using the typewriter when his pencil breaks. The speeded-up typing sequence was recorded on a videodisc borrowed from the Sports Department. (The note which the Doctor Blu-Tacks to the TARDIS was not the same one found by Sarah and Benton – Baker having been seen to type only two lines.) The remaining Part Two Robot scenes were recorded at the end of the evening – including its pursuit of the Doctor, during which several prop doors, windows and pillars were smashed. The Doctor's use of his hat and scarf was a late addition. The first few Part Three scenes at Kettlewell's were taped next.

A few more days' rehearsal for Parts Three and Four followed. Although the original intention was to film the second studio recording for *Television Drama*, it seems that, by now, the plan had been scrapped – and the project as a whole was formally cancelled by Hargreaves on Friday 7 June.

Thursday 6 June saw Part Three being recorded, in sequence, in TC3; pauses helped ready Kilgarriff's heavy costume. Regular stuntman Terry Walsh was cast as the SRS bouncer, performing a couple of simple action sequences with Baker; Barry suggested that the Doctor could use his scarf to trip up the bouncer. The Bunker control area contained a screen showing a colour-tinted image of a digital countdown clock; this was fed through using the graphics device Anchor. (In Dicks' scripts, the countdown begins at 600 – not 300, as shown on screen.) A monochrome monitor showed OB material of scenes set outside the Bunker. Barry had originally planned to use stock film of missiles being readied for launch, but this plan was abandoned.

> **'Tom was always coming up with clever creative ideas – and he'd always be humble about them'**
>
> **Christopher Barry**

Part Four was recorded on Friday 7 June. After taping the scene in which Harry, Sarah and Kettlewell leave the Bunker, the Robot was readied for the rest of the evening's work. This proceeded largely in scene order, bar the final UNIT HQ sequence, which was taped before all the CSO work; this conclusion called for a split-screen/roll-back-and-mix effect where the Brigadier watches the TARDIS dematerialise. Work concluded with CSO elements being added to some of the OB material; shots recorded in this way included the Robot growing, carrying Sarah (a prop doll) and attacking several UNIT soldiers (all Action Man dolls). Sladen acted out shots of Sarah on the chimney against a yellow background. Shots of the Robot's foot crushing both a soldier (from OB) and a (model) building were taped also; sparks from a spark generator were superimposed in the sequence where the Robot walks into a power line. Multiple CSO images were used in some shots, such as where two UNIT soldiers attacking the giant Robot with OB images of other soldiers in the background.



In studio: Alec Linstead (Jellicoe), Kilgarriff in half-costume and Patricia Maynard (Miss Winters)

Other video effects included the rust spreading over the Robot, its shrinking and fade to nothing. Baker then worked on the TV movie *The Author of Beltraffio* (transmitted November 1976); he also appeared on stage in *The Trials of Oscar Wilde*.

Editing on *Robot* commenced on Monday 24 June and continued through to around Thursday 4 July; very little bar very minor trims (Part One lost the opening line of an OB sequence, for example, and Part Two losing a single shot of the Robot's shadow falling across Chambers' door). However, in mid-June, Barry and Letts decided that they were unhappy with some of the CSO material in Part Four and elected for a remount. On Thursday 24 October (delayed from Friday 11 October), Sladen left rehearsals for *The Ark in Space* and Kilgarriff donned his Robot costume again in the small studio TC7 to record some new shots using OB material; this session over-ran by 25 minutes because of the new CSO techniques being used. At this point, Letts was acting in an advisory capacity to Hinchcliffe while preparing to take over from John McRae as the producer of the BBC's classic serials.

Incidental music was provided, as usual, by Dudley Simpson, who composed circa 45 minutes' music which was recorded by an *ad hoc* orchestra on Wednesday 16 October, Tuesday 10 December and Monday 23 December. Part One was dubbed on Monday 16 December, Part Two on Tuesday 17, Part Three on Friday 20 and Part Four on Tuesday 7 January 1975 (here, the Robot's collapse was accompanied by the sound used for the Exxilon city in *Death to the Daleks*). Keen to see Baker as the Doctor, Slater attend the playback.

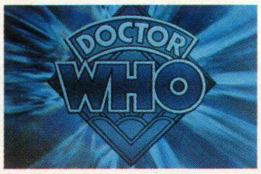
Broadcast of the new season attracted press attention on Saturday 28 December in the *Daily Mail* (which claimed Baker was on £1000 a week, a sum several times greater than the truth), *The Sun* (which interviewed Barry) and the

COSTUME The Robot

Construction of James Acheson's robot design was contracted out to props builder Alastair Bowtell, whom Acheson had worked with on 1972's *The Mutants*. The cumbersome, awkward costume was constructed using aluminium sheeting, bent over in strips to keep it as light as possible. The arms and hands were balsa wood with aluminium cladding, and the pincers were built over the mechanism of a device used in the grocery trade for reaching items down from high shelves. The actor inside wore a radio mic to modulate his voice, transforming it into the robot's booming tones. The head of the costume contained flashing lights; another light, denoting a scanner, was fitted to the costume's back. The finished costume was so heavy that a lightweight silver foil framework was used during camera rehearsals instead.

TITLE SEQUENCE

Title sequences for *Robot* were recorded on Tuesday 12 November 1974, during the final studio session for *The Ark in Space*; these erroneously billed John Levene as 'Sergeant' Benton. The new 35mm titles were created by Bernard Lodge, who reworked those used for the previous season. Newly-arrived producer Philip Hinchcliffe wanted the new titles to be cheap, and suggested incorporating the TARDIS – an image which had not been used in earlier opening sequences. Lodge created swirling colour images by bouncing lights off a vacuum-formed plastic chrome material. New photographic elements showed both the TARDIS and Tom Baker's Doctor. Various versions were made; one retained the 'vortex' opening, while another used a striking TARDIS-shaped corridor.



Daily Express (in which Baker told Mary Duffy that playing the Doctor was rather like his former calling as a monk, only now he saved worlds instead of souls). The Christmas *Radio Times* carried a composite photograph showing Pertwee becoming Baker alongside the programme listing for Part One.

Metal fatigue: the Doctor and Sarah snatch a pause in the hunt for the K-1

Ratings for *Robot* were good, on a par with the same period the previous year – although its audience reaction scores were below average. With Part Two, the series returned to the chart of the Top 20 shows of the week. ITV competition came in the form of talent show *New Faces* on LWT, Yorkshire and Granada, quiz show *Sale of the Century* on ATV and episodes of *Planet of the Apes* most weeks on Southern. A BBC audience research report on Part One dated Thursday 16 January sampled 180 viewers: reaction to Baker was mixed – and although the Robot was much liked, Pertwee was clearly much missed.

In the *Daily Mail* on Saturday 11 January, Martin Jackson was sceptical about Baker's allegedly comic, Harpo Marx-style performance. One week later, in the *Evening News*, Patrick Stoddart commented that Baker was now truly established as "Doctor Who IV"; the *Yorkshire Post*'s Stephen Briscoe was also positive about the new cult figure. Elizabeth Thomas, writing in the *New Statesman* on Friday 24, was unimpressed by Dicks' *King Kong* homage – although she liked Baker's eccentric Doctor. Junior opinion reported in *Time Out* on Thursday 30 January had it that the new Doctor's introduction was "disappointingly crude".

Whitman issued a set of four jigsaws featuring photographs from *Robot* in January 1975, issuing an artwork jigsaw depicting several of 'The Enormously Powerful Giant Robots' in 1978 as part of its 'The Enemies of Doctor Who' line. Toy company Denys Fisher produced an action figure of the Robot in 1976.

Dicks novelised his own scripts as *Doctor Who and the Giant Robot*, first published by Target in March 1975 with a cover by Peter Brookes; this was reissued in April 1979 with a new Jeff Cummins jacket. Dicks also simplified his narrative for an abridged, illustrated edition, *Junior Doctor Who and the Giant Robot*, issued by WH Allen in hardback in May 1979 with a Target paperback in 1980. WH Allen released the original in hardback in April 1986, also with the Cummins cover. The book was reissued by Virgin in May 1992 as *Doctor Who: Robot*, this time bearing an Alister Pearson painting – the same as featured on the sleeve of *Robot*'s January 1992 BBC Video release.

Robot was sold abroad to several countries, including: Australia and Dubai in 1975; Brunei and New Zealand in 1977; Canada, Equador, Gibraltar, Hong Kong and Nigeria in 1978; Brazil, Chile, Guatemala, Malta and Swaziland in 1979; Jordan and Bahrain in 1981; France in 1986; and Germany circa 1990. However, the most significant sale was to North American PBS stations via Time Life in mid-1978, where *Robot* spearheaded a package of 98 Tom Baker episodes. Each of these syndicated episodes was re-edited with timing cuts, commercial breaks, teaser sequences following each cliffhanger, previews at the start of each Part One and opening and closing narration by Howard da Silva, a major stage and film actor in the 1940s whose work had included *Lost Weekend* (all of da Silva's introductions were recorded over two days, with the actor not actually seeing any episodes of the series until much later). Uncut versions were syndicated by Lionheart in the early 1980s, as was a one hour 31 minute-long TV movie version.

In the UK, Superchannel broadcast *Robot* several times from March 1987; UK Gold first transmitted it in both episodic and compilation forms in August 1993. The BBC retains the original tape of Part One, with D3 copies of the remaining instalments. DWM

SERIAL 4A **ROBOT**

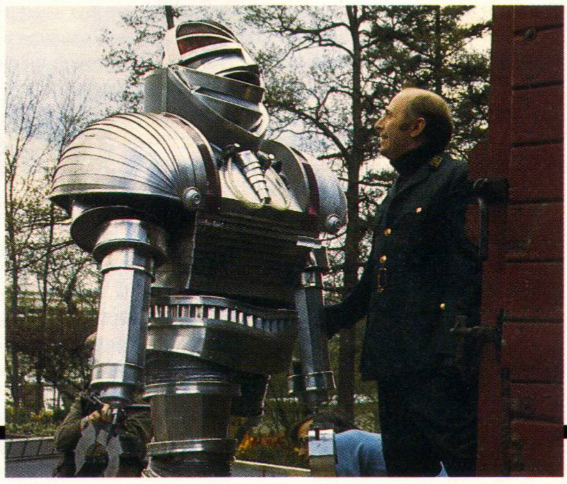
CAST Tom Baker *Doctor Who* with Elisabeth Sladen *Sarah Jane Smith*, Nicholas Courtney *Brigadier Lethbridge Stewart*, Ian Marter *Harry Sullivan*, John Levene *Sergeant Benton*, Alec Linstead *Jellicoe*, Patricia Maynard *Miss Winters*, Edward Burnham *Professor Kettlewell*, Michael Kilgarriff *Robot*, Timothy Craven *Short* [2].

EXTRAS Leslie Weekes, Nigel Stevens *UNIT Stretcher Bearers*; John East *Double for Robot* [hands]; John Scott Martin *Ministry of Defence Guard*; Pat Gorman *Thinktank Guard*; Elizabeth Cassidy *Double for Sarah Jane Smith*; Jack Parker, Colin Hamilton UNIT Drivers; Bill Bingham, Steve Rivers, David Parker, Fred Garratt, Norman Littlejohns, Allan Hinton, Douglas Read, Roger Squires, Christopher Carrington, Peter Isley, Gordon Wall, Brian Fellows *UNIT Soldiers*; George Howse *UNIT Guard* [corpse]; Joe Phillips, Evan Ross, David Melbourne, Judy Clay *Extras*; Jay McGrath *SRS Scientist*; Walter Goodman *Joseph Chambers MP*; Clive Barrie *Thinktank Scientist* [Phillips]; Terry Sartain *SRS Bouncer*; David Pelton, Brian Moorhead *UNIT Soldiers*; Terry Walsh *Bouncer*; Ian Young, Desmond Verini, David Patterson, David Playdon, Hugh Ward, Raymond Savage, Dennis Lycett, Allan Bicini, Norman Colson, Richard Martin, John Milner *UNIT Soldiers*; Eric French, Alan Crisp, Donald Stratford, Tim Blackstone, Douglas Domingo, Alan Thomas, Leslie Weekes, Geoffrey Witherick, Derek Parks, Alex Hood, Roy Pearce, David Pelton, Barry MacDonald, Jay McGrath, Michael Reynel, Nigel Stevens, Noel Crowder, David Enyon, Leon Maybank *SRS Bouncer/SRS Officers/SRS Audience*; Penny Lambirth, Elizabeth Broom, Nancy Adams, Maureen Nelson, Pamela Dale, Pat Pelton *SRS Audience*; Ray Knight *UNIT Soldier* [Bunker]; Geoff Farnall *UNIT Soldier*.

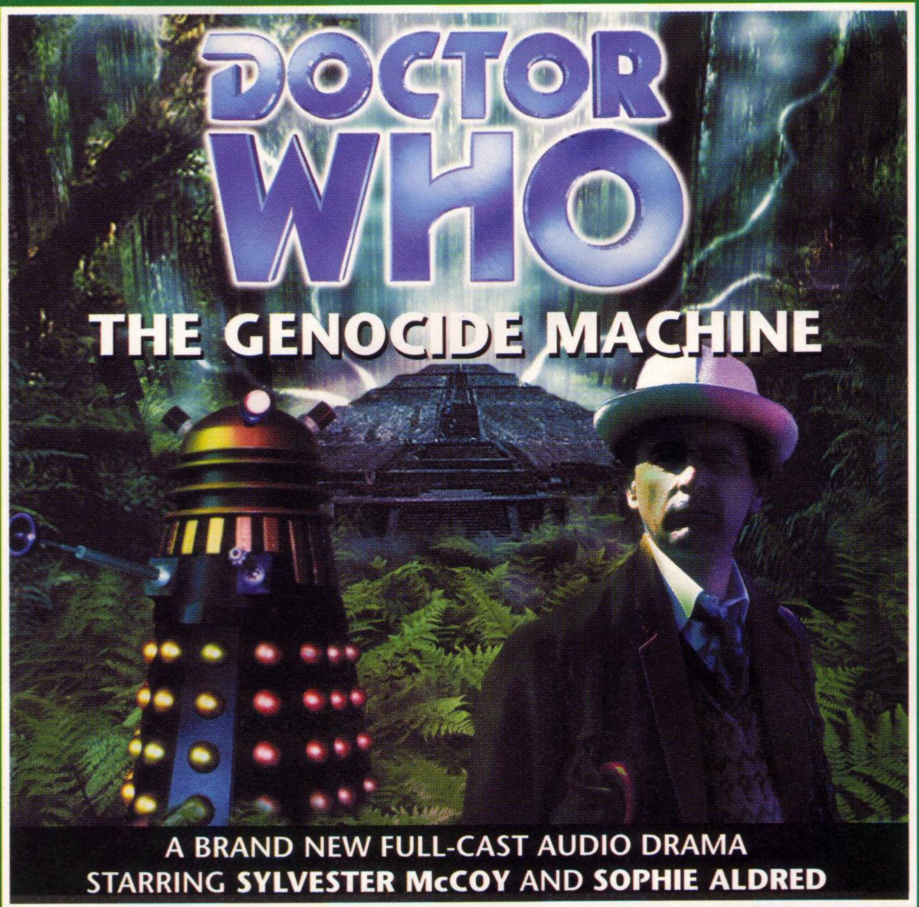
CREDITS *Written by* Terrance Dicks. *Title Music by* Ron Grainer & BBC Radiophonic Workshop. *Title Sequence* Bernard Lodge. *Production Assistant* Peter Grimwade. *Production Unit Manager* George Gallaccio. *Incidental Music by* Dudley Simpson. *Special Sound* Dick Mills. *Lighting* Nigel Wright, John Mason. *Sound* John Holmes [1-2], Trevor Webster [3-4], Vic Godrich. *Visual Effects Designer* Clifford Culley. *Costume Designer* James Acheson. *Make-up* Judy Clay. *Script Editor* Robert Holmes. *Designer* Ian Rawnsley. *Producer* Barry Letts. *Directed by* Christopher Barry. *BBC © 1975*

ORIGINAL TRANSMISSION

Episode	Transmitted	Time	Duration	Rating (Chart pos)	App index
Part One	28 December 1974	5.35-6.00pm	24'11"	10.8M (25th)	53
Part Two	4 January 1975	5.30-5.55pm	25'00"	10.7M (17th)	53
Part Three	11 January 1975	5.30-5.55pm	24'29"	10.1M (22nd)	-
Part Four	18 January 1975	5.30-5.55pm	24'29"	9.0M (30th)	51



OLD FRIENDS. OLD FOES. THE DOCTOR CAN'T SEEM TO ESCAPE HIS PAST.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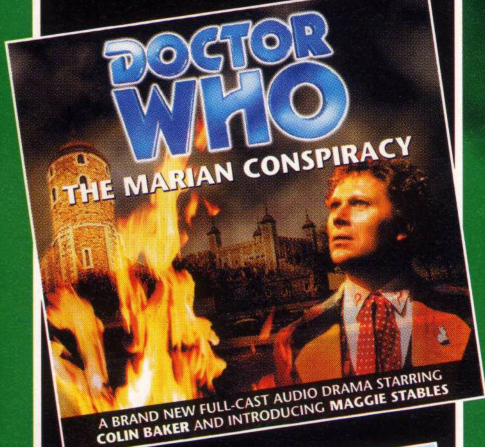
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Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy?

Andrew Pixley listens in to more of the complete and unexpurgated transcripts of the interviews conducted for BBC2's recent *Doctor Who* theme night – and hears the testimony of a self-confessed 'professional fraud'.

Tom Baker's interview for *Doctor Who Night* was very different from the others. Firstly, as 'senior Doctor', Tom would link most of the programming, and consequently a larger proportion of studio time had been given over to him. Secondly, producer Mike Wadding and assistant producer Christine Kenrick had already met Tom the previous week – and, after discussing his input, had decided that preparing a set of questions in advance to help illustrate various elements of the show and its history would be pointless. Instead, the 'interview' would be developed on the spot.

The great actor's arrival on the day causes some initial concern. Tom has come from an interview in Soho for *The Big Issue*, and starts to expound upon the status of the poor in society – employing a barrage of colourful phrases. Such material would certainly not be considered broadcastable, and Tom is persuaded to go upstairs for refreshment. "I don't do water," he smiles broadly when offered a brand-named bottle, and says he feels he has little to say on *Doctor Who* that will not have been heard many times over by the fans. He draws a comparison between fans and religious pilgrims – just the sort of train of thought required, he's told. At this he brightens.

He seems more settled after we chat briefly about the forthcoming promotional tour for his novel *The Boy Who Kicked Pigs*, remarking that he finds the writing easier than the travelling around to promote it. I tell him how much I enjoyed his Christmas speeches at Coventry Cathedral the previous December – when the parallel he'd drawn between the angel appearing to the Virgin Mary and a stunt for *Noel's House Party* had caused a minor ripple of unease throughout the more devout sectors of the congregation. "Good God," he bubbles, "Did I say that?" His face breaks into the familiar *Doctor Who* smile.

In studio, it's easy to see why he has taken to writing – he's a good storyteller with pleasant rhythm, evocative vocabulary and excellent comic timing. As consultant to the project, I've been employed to ensure factual accuracy – but, unlike every other interview conducted for the *Night*, there is an unspoken outstanding that I will not interrupt the Grand Master under any circumstances. "If I say it, you must feel free to use it," says Tom after some particularly outrageous and provocative statement. He wants to see what he can do, conscious that he has a sympathetic audience. Some of what he says can sound distorted and – frankly – mad, but at times there's a hint that, like Spike Milligan, maybe, just maybe, he sees the truth of the world in a clearer, purer way than others.

'I began to be like "Uncle Tom" – a kind of children's entertainer with my silly long scarf and my thyroid eyes'

On where his Doctor came from . . .

"I just responded to the scripts, such as they were, and swiftly learned that I shouldn't read the scripts except my bits, and I still do that . . . And suddenly in a few weeks when it went out it was amazing. It was miraculous. Not only was I famous in no time at all, but people who had just a few weeks before that completely ignored me and walked past me in the street suddenly found me desirable. Not only desirable company, but desirable sexually. And so therefore to be famous and to have a few shillings and to be desired struck me as being a nice state of affairs, you know.

"I didn't know very much about *Doctor Who*. I remember admiring little Patrick Troughton because of his malevolent quality, but I didn't know much about it because, of course, it ran in an afternoon when I had probably been at a football game or was on my way to the pub or getting ready to go to the pub. So I wasn't aware of it being what later was called a cult. It was all a great surprise!"

On his costume . . .

"When I was cast, [costume designer] Jim Acheson and I got on terribly well and we went to various costumiers and tried on various bits of tat. It's very nice to go to a costumiers – it's great if you've had a few drinks – and everyone likes putting on funny hats and arsing about and peeping through the racks of clothes. And gradually a Bohemian image evolved, and then Jim decided that we should also have a scarf made, which was the funniest thing of all really. He bought all this wool – he had a marvellous eye for the colour scheme – and he painted out the colour scheme and gave it all to a woman with a wonderful name, Begonia Pope – I wonder where she is now and I hope she is happy. And she was so impressed to be working for the BBC, so she knitted up all the wool – and because the wool was on the taxpayer, a whole lorryload of wool was delivered. When we got to her little house, she could only talk through the letterbox because we couldn't get into her house because of the scarf which filled the hall. And so when I tried it on, the thing went round me four or five times. Falling about with laughter, Jim – with a marvellous quick eye – said, 'Let's keep that.' And I understand this year it's now a fashion item. It said so in the *Daily Mail* so it must be true . . ."

On his Doctor's eccentric character . . .

"It's the way I am. I can have three or four contradictory thoughts at the same time. But that's because I'm an actor and I just respond. I'm a fantasy. I am a professional fraud – it's my trade, such as it is, to try to be convincing and the more preposterous the situation, then the more interesting it is to try to be convincing. If you are playing a realistic thing, a man with a gun, that can't be difficult. But to play someone from outer space, a benevolent alien who still looks like a human being and who has secrets – how do you suggest he is alien? So I felt the best way to suggest I was an alien – and had dark thoughts, wonderful thoughts – was to be Tom Baker. And so that's what I did. And lots of people liked it, to my surprise."

On where Tom Baker ended and the Doctor began . . .

"Actors often become confused. I became the Doctor, or the Doctor was me. I was just filtering the script through my imagination. It was

Snow joke: with Mary Tamm as Romana in *The Ribos Operation*

wonderful to become the Doctor. You know you are a powerful fiction that was being highly paid and all doors are open and people find you desirable and everyone wants to fetch the drinks and pay for spaghetti – and it is very easy to identify with that character. Yes, it did become me.

"And I was always careful to have a hundred pictures of myself in my inside pocket. You see, fans are not like ordinary human beings – they are generous and their love doesn't pass. They are endlessly loyal and willing to make sacrifices for what they like . . .

"Fans see things in a different way. And so fans of *Doctor Who* or *Star Trek* or Tottenham Hotspur or Manchester United – they are incomprehensible to people who are not fans of that subject. Fans don't really need explanations – fans are intuitive, they are implicit in their affections, rather like very religious people. You know, science fantasy fans are a bit like born-again Christians – it's a source of joy to them, and they feel good. It makes them feel that somewhere there is some explanation for what makes them unhappy, and this is embodied by their heroes in *Star Trek* or Superman or, in my case, Doctor Who. And the benevolence of the character soothed and calmed people.

"Sometimes, I would be in a hospital visiting children, and the doctor is playing along with me, calling me 'Doctor'. You know, it's wonderful in children's hospitals, because in children's medicine they win most of their cases. Not all. And sometime I would be in a jolly ward and children will be ecstatic to see me . . . and then a doctor would say, 'There is a boy downstairs in a coma, and his mother says he was a great fan of yours.' And I would be taken down to a room where a child might be unconscious – dying – and his mother and father there. And when people are suffering like that, they don't care where they turn for comfort. The mother would say, 'He was a great fan of yours, Doctor.' And I would hold the child's hand and say, 'George. It's the Doctor here. I'm sorry Sarah Jane couldn't come, but I've come to see how you are.'

"You know, in that way I was a shameless actor. I didn't mean to be fraudulent. I wanted to comfort people and so I was aware of them watching me, and then watching the child who was dying. And, of course, the child never recovered consciousness. I would like to say a miracle happened . . . and it didn't. I was just a common, inadequate actor trying to comfort people. Then, when I came to leave, they would say, 'Thanks for trying.' They never reproached me. It's incredible, the generosity of people who are suffering."

'There was no question of sex or terrifying things like that. It was kind of innocent, wasn't it?'

On how his background in the Roman Catholic Church helped him suspend his disbelief in Doctor Who . . .

"Being able to believe in miracles. Being able to believe – for priests told us – that being poor was good fortune. 'You are lucky to be poor,' my mother used to say. 'Thank God we are not rich.' Actors say, 'Well, if I can believe that I can believe anything,' and so I would recall those amazing days of my faith and try to do the *Doctor Who* lines, which I never understood anyway. It doesn't matter that actors don't necessarily understand what they are saying – no more than politicians or directors or painters do. They just talk, and so I just said these preposterous lines and people believed them."

On the importance of the companion . . .

"I think in any kind of family entertainment it is quite nice to have the cast made up of recognisable people, so it is quite nice to have an older man and a younger girl – probably different people identify. And some people identify with the tin dog. Those people, I guess – I don't mean they have tin heads – but there are some people who get fond of tin animals, like people get fond of their teddy bears.

"Some of the girls were very glamorous, it seemed to me. I mean it was very important to actually play it as if the obvious chemistry didn't happen between us. There was no question of sex or terrifying things like that. It was kind of innocent, wasn't it? I can't say for sure, because of course I didn't watch *Doctor Who* when I was in it, because I felt it might have spoiled things . . .

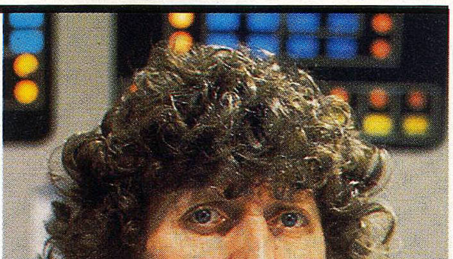
"It had to be whatever my bosses wanted, really. I mean, pretty young girls get big audiences, don't they really? I mean, I married one of them. Yeah, I did. I married one. Yeah, that was great."

On meeting the public . . .

"I didn't really know what was going on. All I wanted to know was what the viewing figures were. If they were great and people liked it and stopped me in the street and said so, that was marvellous. I didn't want to know why they thought it was marvellous . . .

"I avoid actors like the plague. And they avoid me, that's interesting. And directors avoid me like the plague, and I can't say I blame them really. And I avoid me like the plague if I possibly can. But when you are famous like *Doctor Who* was famous, and I embodied *Doctor Who*, then I was able to escape from myself all the time. One was able to not go back to reality because reality was kept at bay for so many years. I find it so difficult now, coping with reality in the twilight of my life. But for that time, there was very little reality – there was just this constant worship.

"And so when I wasn't recording *Doctor Who*, I was being Doctor Who somewhere else – in hospitals or prisons or somewhere. I couldn't pass anyone in the street – everybody knew me. I was like St Francis of Assisi. I was kissing lepers or embracing anyone at all. I was always catching lice from neglected children – going home absolutely teeming with nits and having to use carbolic soap all the time. But I didn't mind catching illnesses or disease from them. That's so pitiful really – it's a fearful confusion. I would embrace the afflicted and the contagious and the infectious."



"I became the Doctor, or the Doctor was me"

On behind-the-scenes conflict . . .

"I thought it could have been more fantastical in a way, but I could see why the producers did it the way they wanted. I didn't like the tin dog, you see. I liked the actor who played it – in rehearsal, I thought he was terribly funny, and I thought it would be very funny to have a man playing a benevolent robot. I thought at one time I wanted to have a parrot as well. Or a frog. I wanted it to be more amazing than it was. But I had to watch it a bit, and of course they got very fed up because I got proprietorial because I was living this part. I was out and about meeting the children – from whom I got tips, you know. So I felt that I knew better than they did. But actors often feel that they know better than their bosses. And they put up with me."

Tanked up: on manouevres in Germany

On where he wanted the show to go . . .

"Well, not knowing much about anything, of course, I am extremely emphatic about everything – especially if I knew nothing about it. So I had all sorts of views about jokes or what constituted being funny because the children liked to laugh a lot as well as be made afraid. All sorts of things gave me a sense of power, because I was drunk on this – I was drunk from other things as well – but I was drunk on being Doctor Who. I was drunk on this benevolent character everybody found funny. It was amazing people found it funny all the time and wanted to be with me. Yes, there were fights, there were disagreements where I would shout and roar and make scenes and everything like that. But I lost most of the fights. I have always lost most of the arguments I've had. And still I don't learn anything in spite of losing all the arguments. I still don't learn. It should depress me really, but I am learning to live with the fact that I never learn anything."

On taking over from Jon Pertwee . . .

"Jon Pertwee jumped on this part and made it fantastic. He was immensely stylish. He would have been very good in *The Avengers* – he was very stylish and quick and cutting and sarcastic. So by the time I got there, the writers could not help themselves, they were still writing for Jon. I was very aware of that, because I began to look at a few old scripts or talk to people, and I was aware that they were still writing in this kind of quick, sarcastic, almost Holmesian way which didn't suit me at all. So, naturally, I had a certain influence about wrenching things my way or rephrasing them, and gradually they began to write towards me."

On the monsters . . .

"I adored them. I mean, I still adore monsters and aliens because we can't in our imaginations – maybe in real life as well – we can't actually do without monsters and aliens. In a sense, the criminal classes in our society are terribly important because without these dreadful criminals, appalling criminals, we wouldn't have anything to write about and there would be no thriller. There would be no television and films at all, since films are often about war and crime and all sorts of deviances. So, to be actually professionally dealing with monsters was right up my street really.

'I had a sense of power, because I was drunk on being Doctor Who. I was drunk from other things as well . . .'

"Of course, I spent so much time reacting to monsters that when it came to going back to theatre and playing more ordinary people, I wasn't much good at it. I was much better playing horses and dogs. I was a very good dog at York. I got a marvellous notice for a dog called Clint . . . People are always more difficult, but Doctor Who was easy because he wasn't really a human being, he just looked like a human being. But when I went on to play Noel Coward . . . people weren't very convinced really.

"My favourite monsters were the monsters that were the favourites of the audience, because it's nice to give people what they like and like to hate as well. And so naturally the imperiousness of the Daleks trying to take over the entire galaxy – it was a bit like the British Empire trying to take over the entire world really. So I liked them, and I always pretended to be amazed when the children were always telling 'em how to deal with Daleks. I don't know if it ever dawned on the BBC, but the children were onto it. They would say, 'Do you know how to deal with Daleks?' I would say, 'No, how do you do that, Frank?' And he would look around very confidentially and he would say, 'You run upstairs.' And I kept on having to be amazed, and it was good. It was good for children to work that out.

"I also liked slimy things, because children like slimy things. I began to be like 'Uncle Tom' – a kind of children's entertainer with my silly long scarf and my thyroid eyes and my long hair. So I did what they wanted me to do . . . It's wonderful to entertain children. And they liked the Daleks, and they hated the Daleks so they loved them. I like that paradox; we often actually like what threatens us. We are sometimes electrified by what threatens us most – and in the area of the imagination, it is wonderful that children can be absolutely terrified. I think children should be terrified . . .

"I had access, you know. 'Don't talk to strange men' – that awful mantra which must disturb children when often the threat is from people they know. But 'don't talk to strange men' didn't apply to me. So all homes where there were children or grandchildren were open to me. I could just knock on doors. I didn't need credit cards or anything. People, adults and banks saw the Doctor and the Doctor's virtue and the Doctor's honesty. It was an amazing sign of the potency of fiction, you know. It was a great time.

"So the Daleks and the slimy ones. They also liked Cybermen, I think. Yes. I have forgotten how you killed Cybermen. I think it was something to do with blowing gold dust into their chest – that used to make me laugh a lot. But it didn't matter really, because I always won. I used to say to the children, 'Isn't it funny? Have you noticed? In the fourth episode, I always win!' And they would say, 'Yes, it's marvellous Doctor . . .'"

"'Don't talk to strange men' didn't apply to me . . ."

Getting into the head of the character? With Louise Jameson as Leela in *The Invisible Enemy*

'Being the Doctor spoiled me. Why should I ever want to be Tom Baker, ordinary and insecure?'

On becoming famous . . .

"Because I'm pathetic in some ways, it made me feel even more important. I was suddenly a worldwide star in television. I heard it sold to 93 countries, and in America more than 200 stations. It was an amazing thing to go to a country like Holland or Australia or America and be very famous. When you got on the plane, pilots used to say 'Come on up front,' so I knew what it was to take off in a jumbo jet. And sometimes they would say, 'Do you want to have a go?' I don't think they were very serious because I am not a very good driver. I mean, I have only got a van, never mind a jumbo jet. So they would let me be in aeroplanes or go up in balloons or drive in tanks. I used to go to Germany to divert the troops and they let me drive tanks. It was simply wonderful to be famous, to be recognised and well-treated.

"I remember in Notting Hill Gate, there was a little fellow called Dmitri who had an electrical shop. One day, about 20 children from a school were going by and the coach driver recognised me and stopped. They all piled off the coach and all these children were embracing me and holding on to me, and I was giving them money or sweets or pictures of myself – all that kind of nonsense really amused them. So after they went away happily taking pictures of me, Dmitri – this Greek boy – he said, 'It must be wonderful, Mr Baker, to be Doctor Who.' I said, 'Yes, it is nice' – I realised he was worried about all the attention I got. I said, 'But it's nice to be Dmitri. You often talk to me about your children.' He said, 'Yes, but when I walk down the road, nobody says, "There goes Dmitri." But when you are walking down the street, everybody is saying "There's the Doctor." Everybody wants to kiss you. Everybody wants to kiss.' He was a bit hung up on kissing – I think Greeks are big kissers. I don't know. But anyway, he kissed me and I left.

"I adored being adored. When I was young, I wanted to be liked. Later on, I wanted to be loved. I finished up as Doctor Who, and I wanted to be adored now. Of course, in my twilight I rather fancy worship.

"I am talking in this confessional way because you are reminding me of happy days, which haven't entirely gone you see. The thing about television and moving pictures is that they confer a kind of immortality. The reason why everybody wants to get into television – there are lots of reasons, for some it's a soft option – but the real thing I think is when you are in television, you don't die. I mean, when did anyone who was on television ever die? I mean, we long for them to die – the people I look on in television, they make me long for death – but somehow or other, you don't die. On a more serious note – away from getting tired of presenters who won't die – is that television and films confer immortality. You are forever all the work. You are Humphrey Bogart or James Stewart. We don't know them privately, so they are immortalised. Now we have an amazing situation with repeats on television and so many channels that the living – such as we are – are entertained by the dead. This is a nice paradox. Something I watch a film I am in – and of course if I see myself running upstairs it makes me weep – but, sometimes, I am the only one left alive . . .

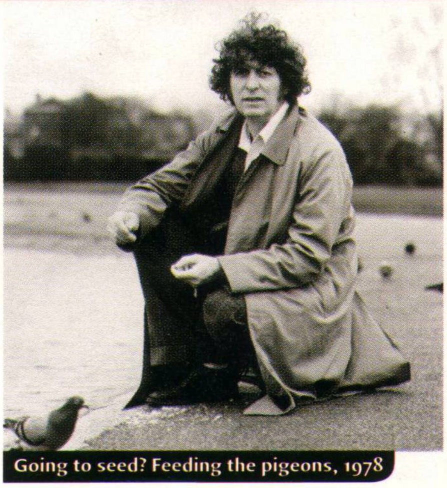
"But to be adored as I was, as Doctor Who, no it never, never went away. It was wonderful. After a while it spoiled me, you see. Why should I ever want to be Tom Baker? Tom Baker was ordinary and full of anxieties and uncertain of himself and insecure. But Doctor Who had secrets. He could solve things. He could save the universe. Yeah."

On why he chose to leave the series . . .

"That's a good question: why should I leave something that was so wonderful? It was simply that I got so proprietorial. You may have to ask other people this, but as I recall I was so proprietorial that it was almost impossible to direct me. I thought I knew everything – because, of course, it was about me, I thought. Hmm. And therefore I began to sense the clashes, and watched people's reactions to me, and gradually I thought, 'Perhaps I've done enough, really.' And when I became aware of these kinds of imperfections in my reaction to people or theirs to me in the rehearsals, I thought I would just go away.

"I gave it up, you know. It was terrible – absolutely terrible."

To be concluded



Going to seed? Feeding the pigeons, 1978

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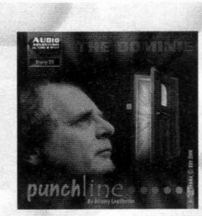
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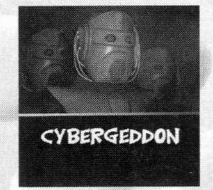
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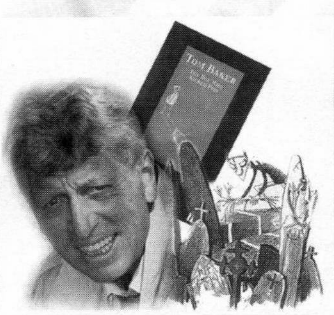

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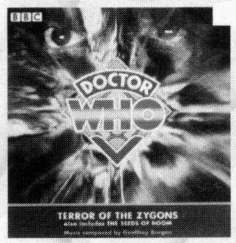
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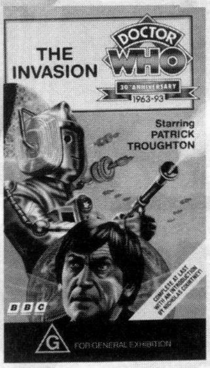
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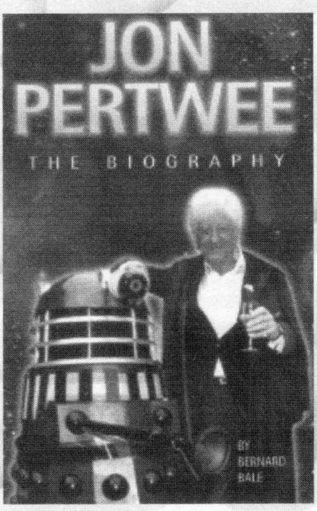
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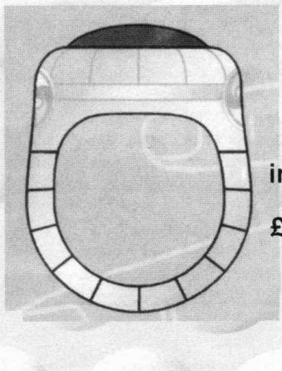

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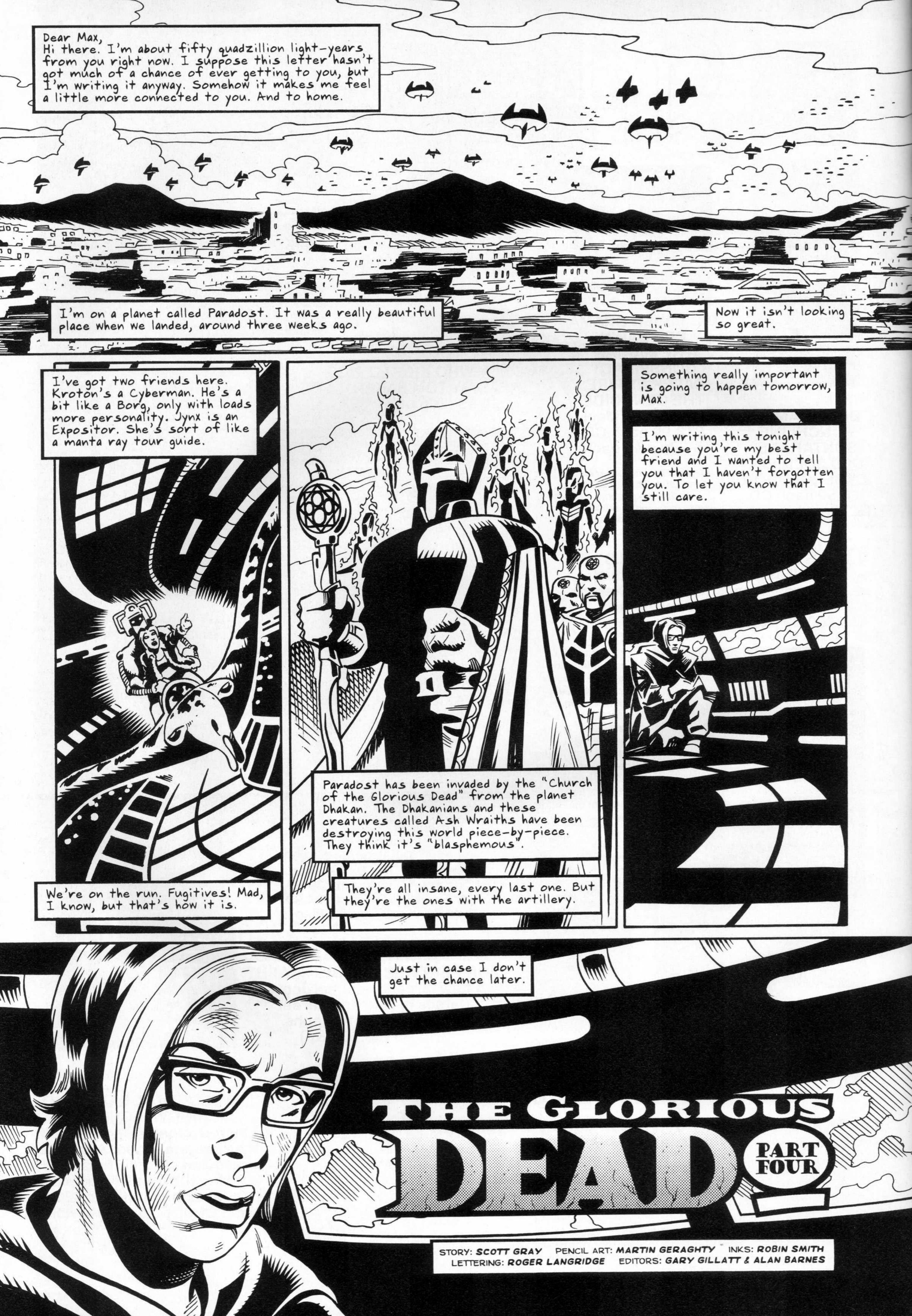
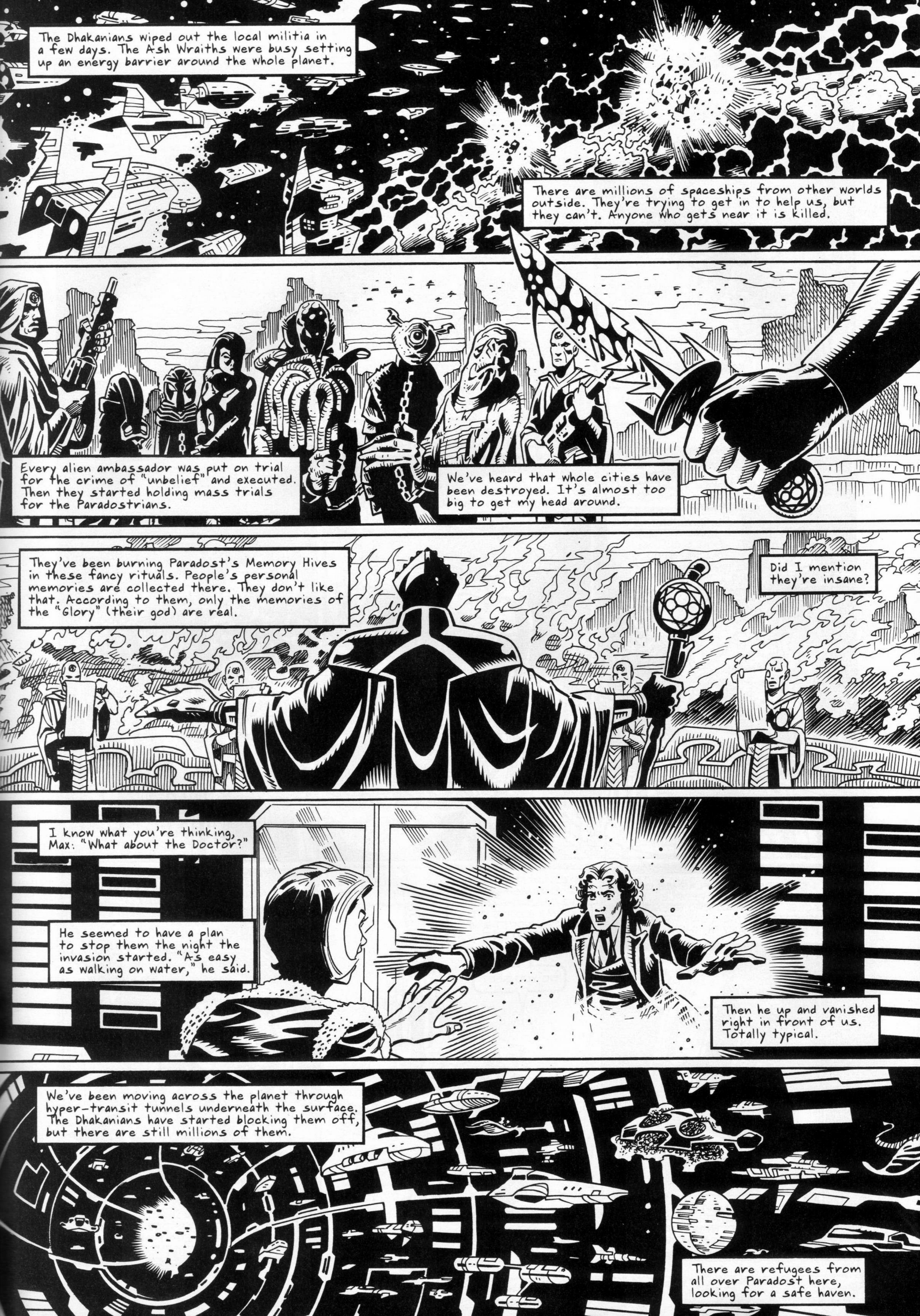
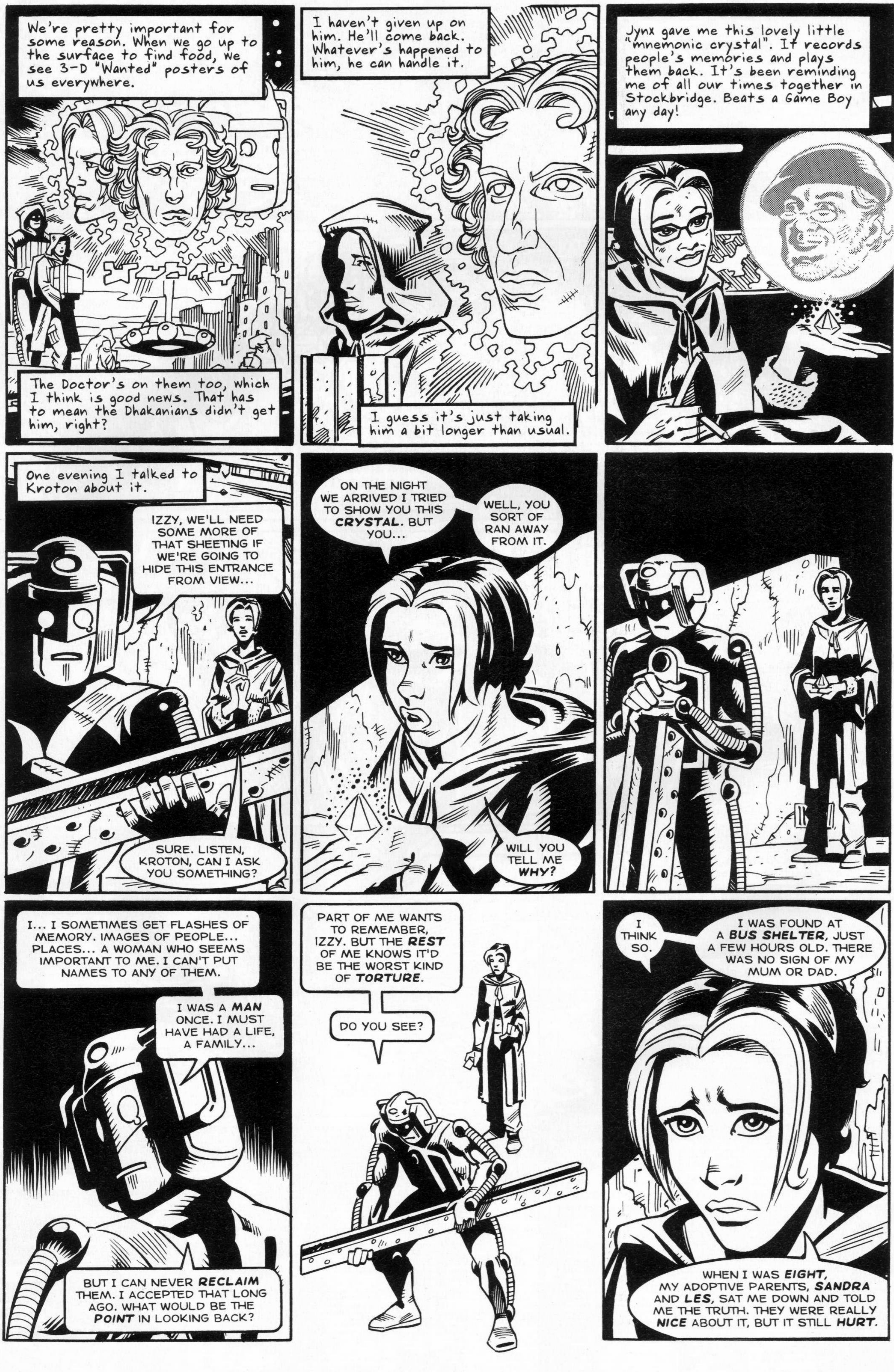
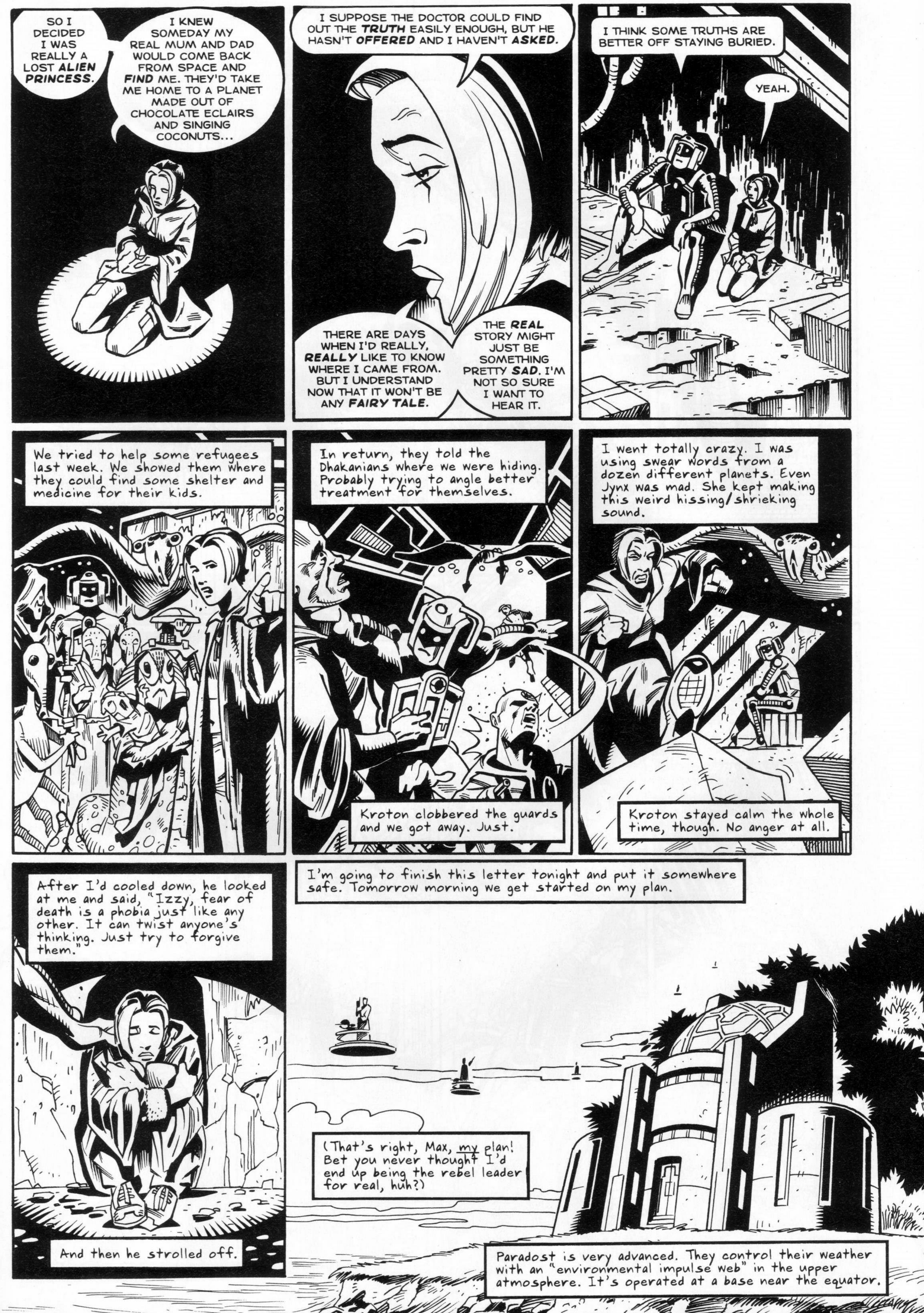
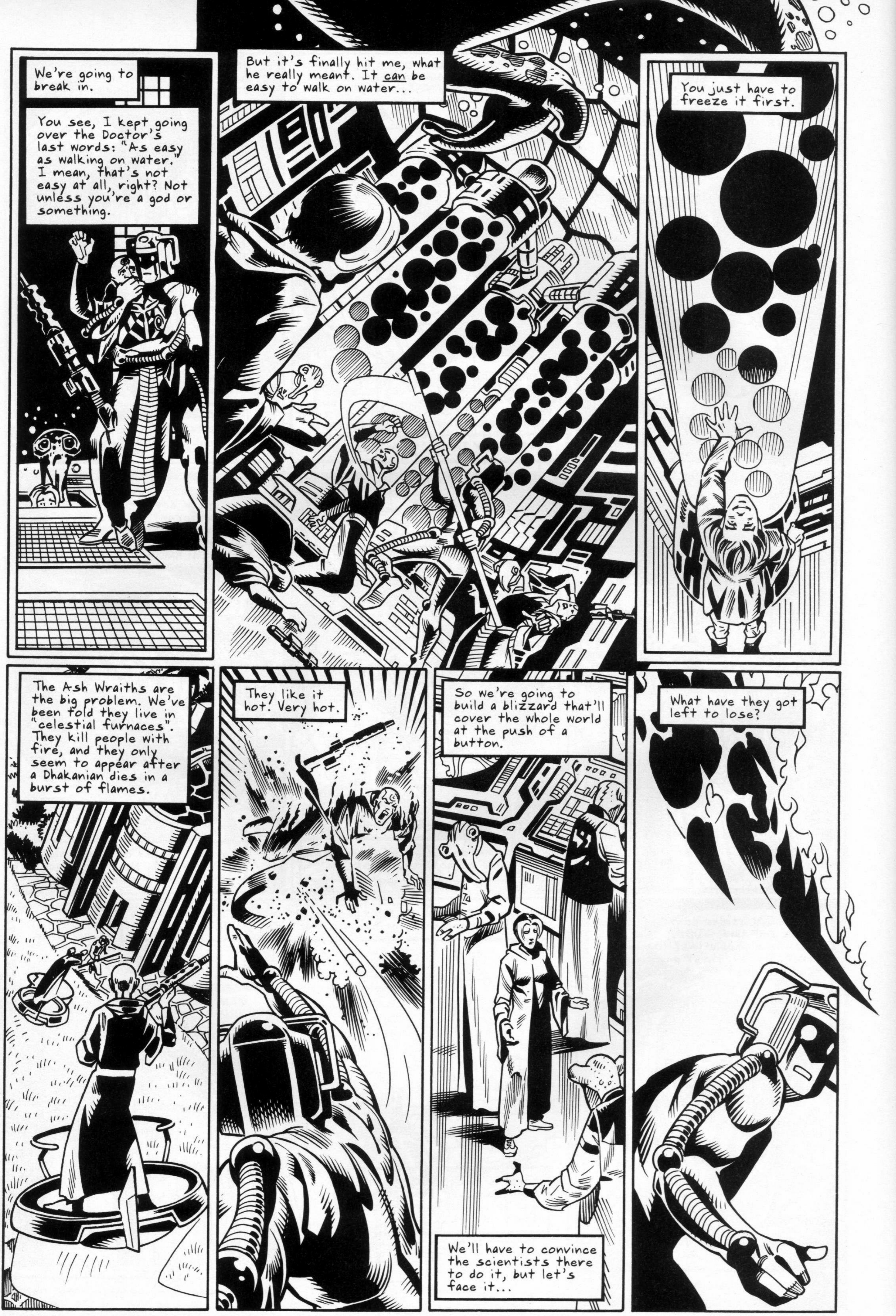

Dear Max,
Hi there. I'm about fifty quadzillion light-years from you right now. I suppose this letter hasn't got much of a chance of ever getting to you, but I'm writing it anyway. Somehow it makes me feel a little more connected to you. And to home.
I'm on a planet called Paradost. It was a really beautiful place when we landed, around three weeks ago.
Now it isn't looking so great.
I've got two friends here. Kroton's a Cyberman. He's a bit like a Borg, only with loads more personality. Jynx is an Expositor. She's sort of like a manta ray tour guide.
We're on the run. Fugitives! Mad, I know, but that's how it is.
Paradost has been invaded by the "Church of the Glorious Dead" from the planet Dhakan. The Dhakanians and these creatures called Ash Wraiths have been destroying this world piece-by-piece. They think it's "blasphemous".
They're all insane, every last one. But they're the ones with the artillery.
Something really important is going to happen tomorrow, Max.
I'm writing this tonight because you're my best friend and I wanted to tell you that I haven't forgotten you. To let you know that I still care.
Just in case I don't get the chance later.
THE GLORIOUS DEAD
PART FOUR

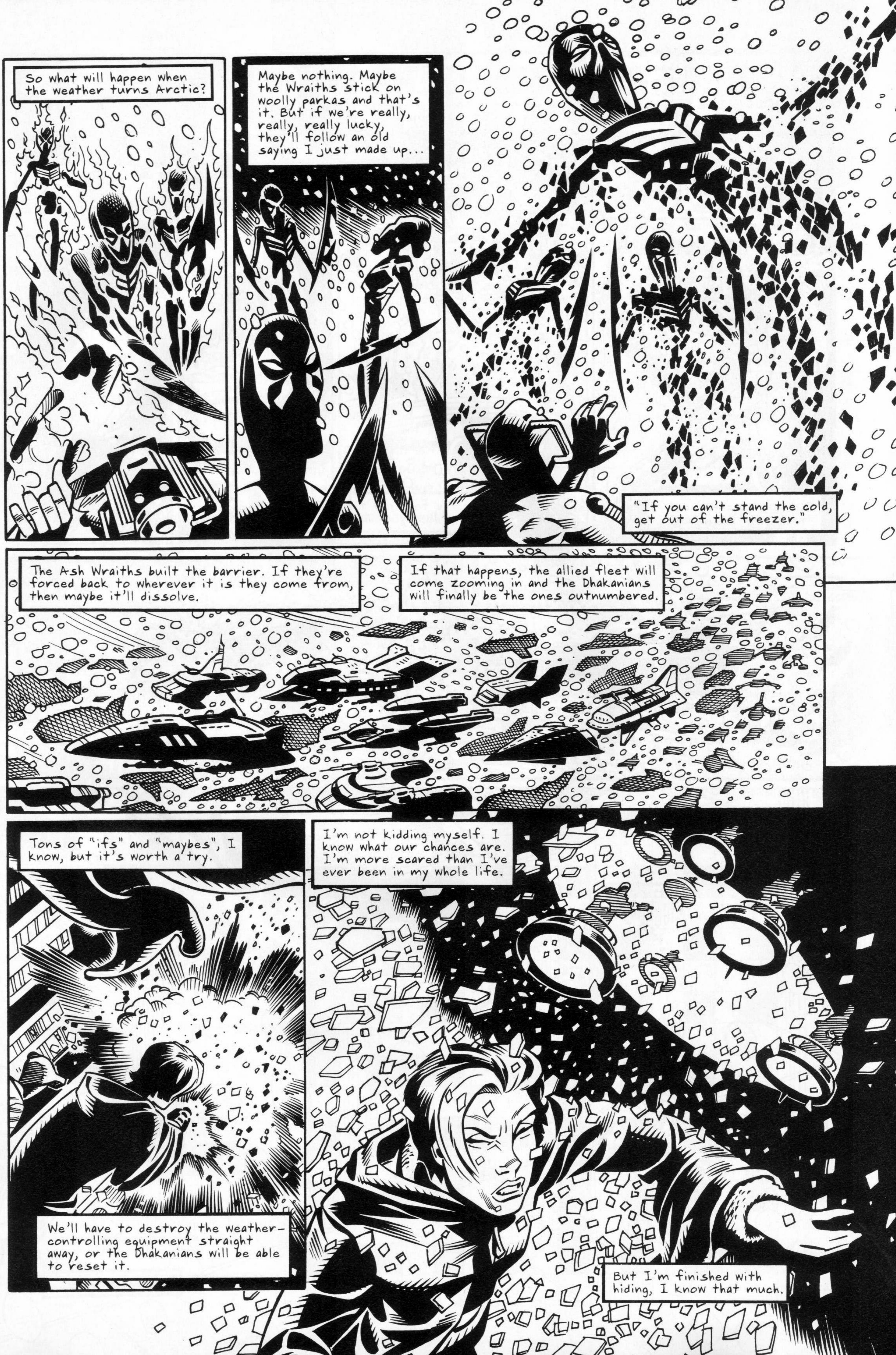
STORY: SCOTT GRAY PENCIL ART: MARTIN GERAGHTY INKS: ROBIN SMITH
LETTERING: ROGER LANGRIDGE EDITORS: GARY GILLATT & ALAN BARNES

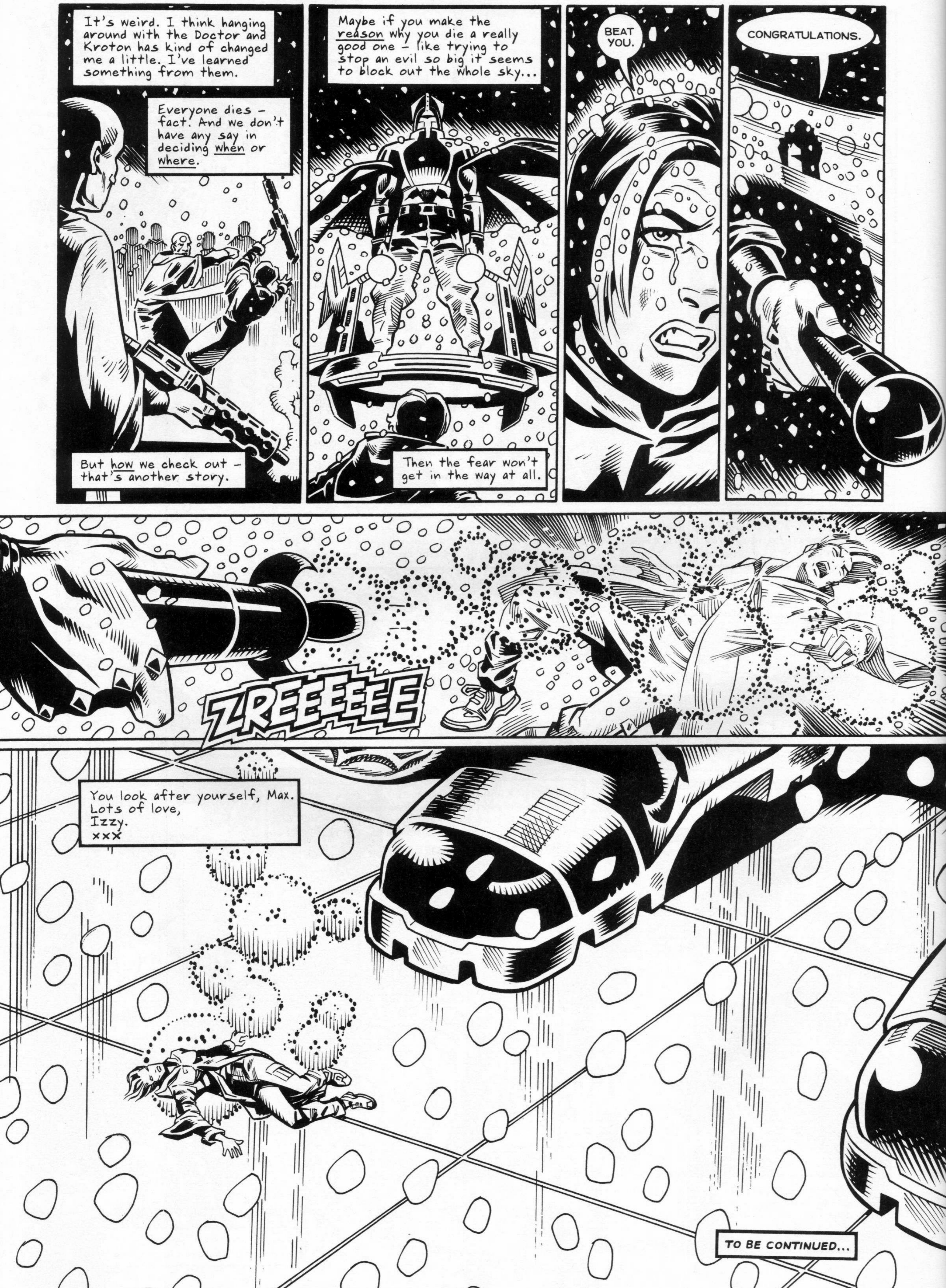

The Dhakanians wiped out the local militia in a few days. The Ash Wraiths were busy setting up an energy barrier around the whole planet.
There are millions of spaceships from other worlds outside. They're trying to get in to help us, but they can't. Anyone who gets near it is killed.
Every alien ambassador was put on trial for the crime of "unbelief" and executed. Then they started holding mass trials for the Paradostrians.
We've heard that whole cities have been destroyed. It's almost too big to get my head around.
They've been burning Paradost's Memory Hives in these fancy rituals. People's personal memories are collected there. They don't like that. According to them, only the memories of the "Glory" (their god) are real.
Did I mention they're insane?
I know what you're thinking, Max: "What about the Doctor?"
He seemed to have a plan to stop them the night the invasion started. "As easy as walking on water," he said.
Then he up and vanished right in front of us. Totally typical.
We've been moving across the planet through hyper-transit tunnels underneath the surface. The Dhakanians have started blocking them off, but there are still millions of them.
There are refugees from all over Paradost here, looking for a safe haven.


We're pretty important for some reason. When we go up to the surface to find food, we see 3-D "Wanted" posters of us everywhere.
The Doctor's on them too, which I think is good news. That has to mean the Dhakanians didn't get him, right?
I haven't given up on him. He'll come back. Whatever's happened to him, he can handle it.
I guess it's just taking him a bit longer than usual.
Jynx gave me this lovely little "mnemonic crystal". It records people's memories and plays them back. It's been reminding me of all our times together in Stockbridge. Beats a Game Boy any day!
One evening I talked to Kroton about it.
IZZY, WE'LL NEED SOME MORE OF THAT SHEETING IF WE'RE GOING TO HIDE THIS ENTRANCE FROM VIEW...
SURE. LISTEN, KROTON, CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
ON THE NIGHT WE ARRIVED I TRIED TO SHOW YOU THIS CRYSTAL. BUT YOU...
WELL, YOU SORT OF RAN AWAY FROM IT.
WILL YOU TELL ME WHY?
I... I SOMETIMES GET FLASHES OF MEMORY. IMAGES OF PEOPLE... PLACES... A WOMAN WHO SEEMS IMPORTANT TO ME. I CAN'T PUT NAMES TO ANY OF THEM.
I WAS A MAN ONCE. I MUST HAVE HAD A LIFE, A FAMILY...
BUT I CAN NEVER RECLAIM THEM. I ACCEPTED THAT LONG AGO. WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT IN LOOKING BACK?
PART OF ME WANTS TO REMEMBER, IZZY. BUT THE REST OF ME KNOWS IT'D BE THE WORST KIND OF TORTURE.
DO YOU SEE?
I THINK SO.
I WAS FOUND AT A BUS SHELTER, JUST A FEW HOURS OLD. THERE WAS NO SIGN OF MY MUM OR DAD.
WHEN I WAS EIGHT, MY ADOPTIVE PARENTS, SANDRA AND LES, SAT ME DOWN AND TOLD ME THE TRUTH. THEY WERE REALLY NICE ABOUT IT, BUT IT STILL HURT.


SO I DECIDED I WAS REALLY A LOST **ALIEN PRINCESS**.
I KNEW SOMEDAY MY REAL MUM AND DAD WOULD COME BACK FROM SPACE AND **FIND** ME. THEY'D TAKE ME HOME TO A PLANET MADE OUT OF CHOCOLATE ECLAIRS AND SINGING COCONUTS...
I SUPPOSE THE DOCTOR COULD FIND OUT THE **TRUTH** EASILY ENOUGH, BUT HE HASN'T **OFFERED** AND I HAVEN'T **ASKED**.
THERE ARE DAYS WHEN I'D REALLY, **REALLY** LIKE TO KNOW WHERE I CAME FROM. BUT I UNDERSTAND NOW THAT IT WON'T BE ANY **FAIRY TALE**.
THE **REAL** STORY MIGHT JUST BE SOMETHING PRETTY **SAD**. I'M NOT SO SURE I WANT TO HEAR IT.
I THINK SOME TRUTHS ARE BETTER OFF STAYING BURIED.
YEAH.
We tried to help some refugees last week. We showed them where they could find some shelter and medicine for their kids.
In return, they told the Dhakanians where we were hiding. Probably trying to angle better treatment for themselves.
Kroton clobbered the guards and we got away. Just.
I went totally crazy. I was using swear words from a dozen different planets. Even Jynx was mad. She kept making this weird hissing/shrieking sound.
Kroton stayed calm the whole time, though. No anger at all.
After I'd cooled down, he looked at me and said, "Izzy, fear of death is a phobia just like any other. It can twist anyone's thinking. Just try to forgive them."
And then he strolled off.
I'm going to finish this letter tonight and put it somewhere safe. Tomorrow morning we get started on my plan.
(That's right, Max, my plan! Bet you never thought I'd end up being the rebel leader for real, huh?)
Paradost is very advanced. They control their weather with an "environmental impulse web" in the upper atmosphere. It's operated at a base near the equator.


We're going to break in.
You see, I kept going over the Doctor's last words: "As easy as walking on water." I mean, that's not easy at all, right? Not unless you're a god or something.
But it's finally hit me, what he really meant. It *can* be easy to walk on water...
You just have to freeze it first.
The Ash Wraiths are the big problem. We've been told they live in "celestial furnaces". They kill people with fire, and they only seem to appear after a Dhakanian dies in a burst of flames.
They like it hot. Very hot.
So we're going to build a blizzard that'll cover the whole world at the push of a button.
We'll have to convince the scientists there to do it, but let's face it...
What have they got left to lose?


So what will happen when the weather turns Arctic?
Maybe nothing. Maybe the Wraiths stick on woolly parkas and that's it. But if we're really, really, really lucky, they'll follow an old saying I just made up...
"If you can't stand the cold, get out of the freezer."
The Ash Wraiths built the barrier. If they're forced back to wherever it is they come from, then maybe it'll dissolve.
If that happens, the allied fleet will come zooming in and the Dhakanians will finally be the ones outnumbered.
Tons of "ifs" and "maybes", I know, but it's worth a try.
We'll have to destroy the weather-controlling equipment straight away, or the Dhakanians will be able to reset it.
I'm not kidding myself. I know what our chances are. I'm more scared than I've ever been in my whole life.
But I'm finished with hiding, I know that much.


It's weird. I think hanging around with the Doctor and Kroton has kind of changed me a little. I've learned something from them.
Everyone dies – fact. And we don't have any say in deciding when or where.
But how we check out – that's another story.
Maybe if you make the reason why you die a really good one – like trying to stop an evil so big it seems to block out the whole sky...
Then the fear won't get in the way at all.
BEAT YOU.
CONGRATULATIONS.
ZREEEEEE
You look after yourself, Max. Lots of love, Izzy. xxx
TO BE CONTINUED...

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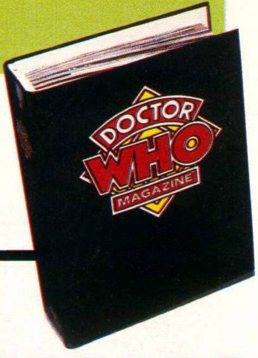

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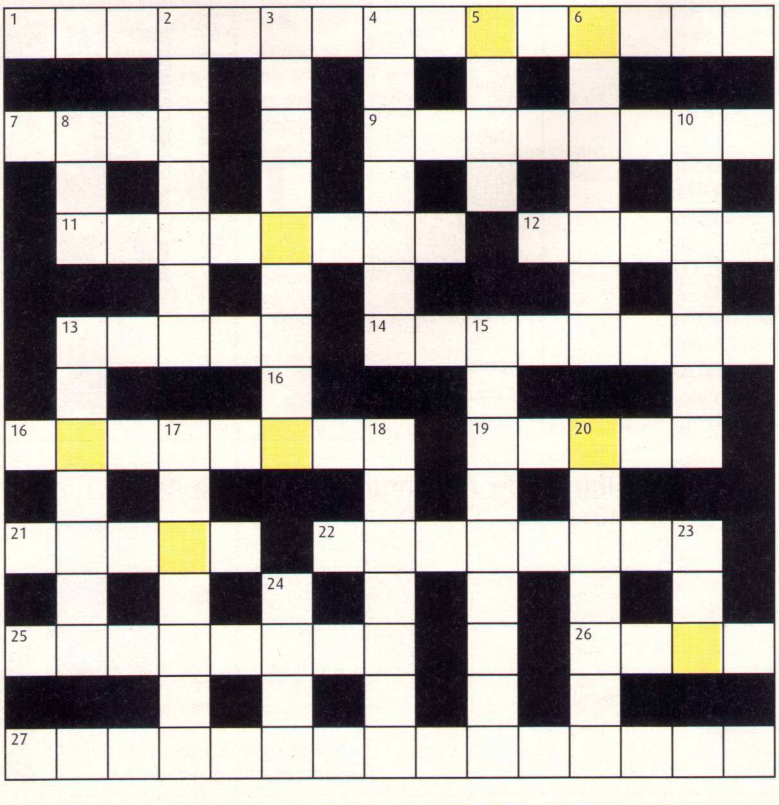
Across

1,27 Ma's fembot reveals Tosh wrote *Chase* – but that's another story! [3,8,2,2,12,3]
7 Fifth Doctor's turn? [4]
9 Abandoned astronaut held in cosmic ray for Daleks [8]
11 The Asian child: awful leech grips a no-good initially [5,3]
12 Some disco people in peepshow! [5]
13 Robot, a renegade, hides returning ambassador [5]
14 War lord has pashmina worn without much top – capital dress instead! [8]
16 "Melt Brig!" ordered sweet inventor [7,1]
19 Lakertyan has Ian beaten about – knocked out! [5]
21 Exposes oneself – around Earth and Delta Magna, for example [5]
22 Heartless Trods swallow chopped-up Fifi to get Wyndham's walking plants [8]
25 IMC Eddie ordered 1 27 [2,6]
26 Girl for whom the bell *didn't* toll during 1 27? [4]
27 [see 1ac]

Down

2 Fortune-teller baffled reportedly eyeless Mogarian [7]
3 Gnat back in rooms, back in prison! [9]
4 Country folk . . . like Hal, perhaps – or Jeffrey! [7]
5 Kara modified sea monster [4]
6 Colony administrator is headless toff, one taking on Time Lord interventionists [7]
8 Havoc? No laughing matter for robot [3]
10 Caliper replaced Auton [7]
13 The Doctor: a nasty individual, according to the Sevateem [4,3]
15 Doctor Jon, Not-we, keeps information for mysterious Lady [9]
17 Spaceman, like Jarvis – and Gordon! [7]
18 [see 23d]
20 Nasty Rani gets SOS round and about for my people! [7]
23 Roman stain corrupts dukedom? [3,7]
24 Dalek chief takes wedding vow on distant planet [4]



DWM 288 crossword solution

Across
7 Camilla
8 Sharkey
10 Amdo
11 The Beatles
12 Lalla Ward
17 Monarch
19 Ephemeral
22 Mandragora
25 Aggedor
26 O'Connor

Down
1 Macmillan
2 Bigon
3 Plot
4,24ac Three Who Rule
5 Arcturian
6,15ac Peter Davison
9 Wells
13 Kit Pedler
14 Schoolboy
16 Operator
18 Xeros
20 Zargo
21 Krang
23 Arch

Hidden name:
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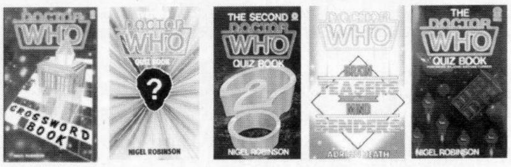

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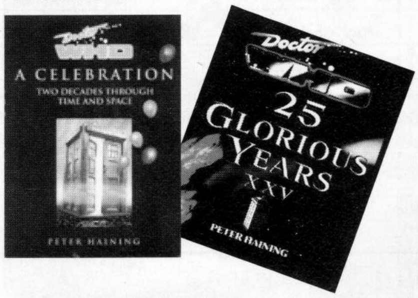

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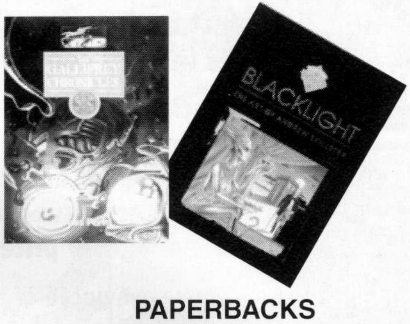

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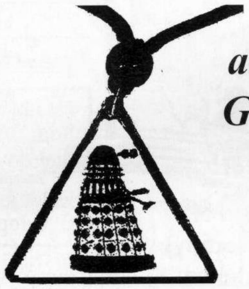

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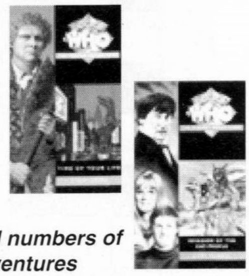

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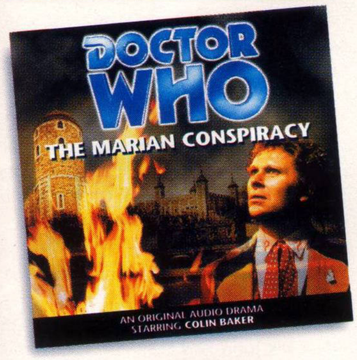
Shelf Life

With **Vanessa Bishop**

DOCTOR WHO: THE MARIAN CONSPIRACY



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On a fascinating trip to Tudor England, the Sixth Doctor finds the historical in rude health.

Where pure historicals are concerned, *Doctor Who* usually prefers to play away, rather than at home. Hearing, in *The Marian Conspiracy*, Queen Mary share her views on religion, and such big guns as her father Henry VIII and half-sister Elizabeth, you realise just how much *Doctor Who* has neglected British history.

Britain's past – or more specifically, *England's* past – is normally no more than a magnet for stranded aliens out of their box in frustration at our own dozy primitiveness. All the nasty business of real history is usually left to generic Johnny Foreigner – who'll cut out your heart if he fancies his crops are wilting – or European blighters, who cheer at guillotines and pitch you to lions for light entertainment. Jacqueline Rayner's script re-addresses this balance. England in the mid-sixteenth century is a country of fear and execution. Mary has denounced the Protestant faith, returning the country to the Catholic fold. Subjects who refuse to follow her example find their fate sealed at the stake or scaffold.

Like *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve*, a story *The Marian Conspiracy* occasionally interacts with, it's religion that drives the plot. To some extent, history writes Rayner's story for her. Her skill is in massaging the Doctor and a new companion – the curmudgeonly gentle Evelyn – into its front line without any permanent effect. History, of course, travels slower than the Doctor, and it's notable that *The Marian Conspiracy* largely proceeds with almost nothing happening. In fact, its middle episodes are full of intimate, quiet discussion – and yet they are spellbinding. Automatically, dialogue which might elsewhere be viewed as background, or even padding, becomes dramatic and poignant, as Rayner draws on our foreknowledge of history's tragic outcome.

The Marian Conspiracy continually questions the horrors committed in the name of religion. The Doctor treads the subject as carefully as a politician. Much of his argument recalls the type David Whitaker would affect. He asks the Queen to consider the good of her actions, and although they're abhorrent, settles for her belief that, in her eyes, what she's doing is right and, as the *Doctor Who and the Crusaders* novelisation would put it, for the best of reasons. It's a view that might explain why Mary is given a more sympathetic portrayal than history would suggest. It's also a line the Doctor turns upon himself. In a scene that finds him justifying the many deaths his travelling and interference have caused, Big Finish have cooked a moment of top drawer classic *Doctor Who*.

The Marian Conspiracy is intelligently explored and reasoned, resulting in much less of the sound and fury Big Finish usually impress us with. We spend much longer in the company of its characters than most modern media would allow. Actionless scenes between two players that pile on the minutes are typical of the play as a whole, but left uninterrupted, the characters of *The Marian Conspiracy* are seen to live more, think more and suffer more than any we've encountered on audio so far.

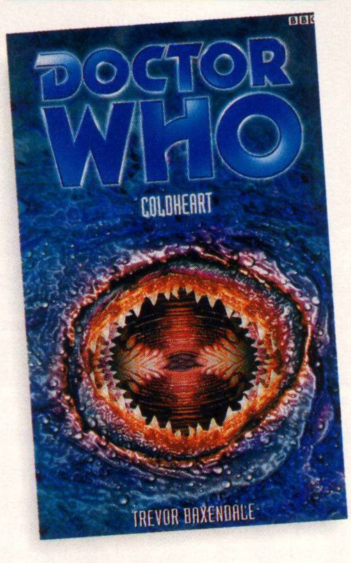
When things are this good, you just know it can't last. *The Marian Conspiracy* concludes with an episode I just don't buy. Having skilfully avoided the routine of capture and escape, it abruptly grafts on just such an adventure, resorting to the usual dash when it had already set itself lengths ahead of such standard fare by simply introducing the Doctor into Mary's confidence. It's questionable whether the Doctor and Evelyn would be locked together in the Tower of London, that they'd appear so light-hearted in the face of the Tower's grim significance or, most galling, that the Doctor's escape would be easier as a prisoner than mine was as a tourist on a visit there last December. Allowing, then, the TARDIS to whisk away characters endangered by Mary's reign smacks the ideology of *The Massacre*, and novels like *The Witch Hunters*, full in the face. *The Marian Conspiracy* leaves wishing history to be softer than it is, when earlier it seemed to display more courage.

> **The characters in *The Marian Conspiracy* live more, think more and suffer more than any we've met on audio so far**

The Marian Conspiracy may end as a pear-shaped jewel, but finales that fail to maintain the promise of the previous episodes are hardly a rarity in *Doctor Who*. This blip cannot dim the story's highs – and the story's highs are just sublime . . .

Majestic even.

DOCTOR WHO: COLDHEART



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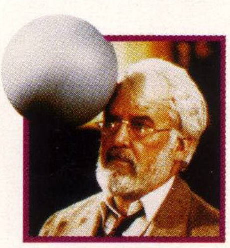
The word 'slimer' has unpleasant connotations. From primary school days, a slimer belonged to the Bogie Family, to the House of Snot, to misplaced mucus. Oh please, enough already. Slimer is also the term Trevor Baxendale has given to *Coldheart*'s genetic mutations, which similarly glisten and ooze, dripping like a victim of a TV gunk-tank stunt.

Slimers, indeed. I mean, that's straight to the point. In fact, for an Eighth Doctor novel, that's positively flippant. With such a catchy, slang name, these social pariahs reflect the TV series more than the book range – Mutos, Swampies, Slimers, etc. They're gooey *Doctor Who* types, found in *Doctor Who*-type places, where *Doctor Who*-type things keep happening.

Coldheart runs with reassuring familiarity. It proves itself not by how far the author steps beyond *Doctor Who*'s conventions, but by how successfully he works within them. Baxendale surely knows we'll recognise the pattern, and



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I'm guessing a good deal of *Doctor Who* viewing goes on at Harlequin. Photos alone could not lend so much character to their figures' poses. How else could egghead and 'R'-deficient Remus (weleased without his Womulus) be so wightly, sorry rightly, postured in the princely stance expected of the child prodigy? How else would Shockeye's portly stomach be so uncannily accurate?

Of course, accuracy deserts Sil's features, as by Harlequin's scale, he measures in about half the size of a peanut. Professor Chronotis is upstaged by Skagra's sphere, welded to his temple. Gavrok is the least inspiring, but for added *Delta and the Bannermen* realism, dip him in honey and watch him attract outsized bees. Likewise, the *Terror Autons*' carnival heads are detachable if introduced to pliers.

Following *Toy Story 2*, I imagine the Pirate Captain Top Dog amongst this release. He has the same bloated sense of self-importance as Buzz Lightyear, besides the catchphrases and built-in gimmicks. Yet, cast in shiny pewter, he's even more suspect than on TV, appearing here in a mass of straps, studs, rubber and metal. Does the Captain have fetish issues? Dominated by a nurse too, and all before half past six on a Saturday.

that if it's presented well enough, then as thrill-seekers, he knows we'll follow – much in the way a favourite story is watched, over and over, even though its conclusion remains the same. *Coldheart* teases you to keep reading, rather than shocking you into stopping. It offers enjoyment from familiar twists and turns, rather than taking childish potshots at *Doctor Who* cornerstones. Yes, it's formulaic, but it nails the broader appeal of *Doctor Who* more than most.

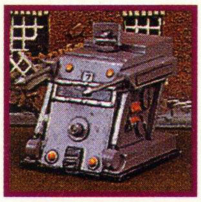
Coldheart is the first of two novels this month that are intent on portraying *Doctor Who* as it is remembered. They do this with two wildly different approaches. *Coldheart*'s philosophy is not to view the series as possessing any structural weakness. It rejects angst and sex – bad news for Fitz's girlfriend count – and any other revision of the programmes values. Baxendale also humbly assumes that you're more interested in the Doctor than in his own characters. This makes *Coldheart* one of the series' most Doctor-centric novels, and pushes it further towards its television roots.

A desert planet with a frozen core provides the setting for the adventure. The Slimers have mutated from the dominant Eskoni, a people obsessed with racial purity and good breeding. Treading similar ground to *Genesis of the Daleks*, it is quite possible to slot Nyder's "scarred relics" speech into the Eskoni's endeavour to "keep the Eskoni gene pool clean". That this is a sentiment expressed by a priest is strangely unsurprising. The holy men of literature have a tradition of corruption and *Doctor Who* has always cast them as either fools or villains.

Commissioned for mainstream TV, Eskon's ice mine and polluted water supply could easily translate into a tale of a careless chemical plant and affected townsfolk. The author is in his Malcolm Hulke hat, and is similarly linking his monsters to his message.

Both of this month's novels are intent on portraying *Doctor Who* as it is remembered

I'm hard pressed to think of another Eighth Doctor book that would fit so comfortably into the Past Doctor range. Not that that should be judged as a measure of success – it's just that *Coldheart* is a non-specific story, a story that bridges all eras and all divides, an adventure that's as appropriate for the First Doctor as it is for the Third, or the Fifth, or the Eighth. It's therefore equally difficult to name an Eighth Doctor book that satisfies as much, never losing the scent of what we look for in *Doctor Who*. *Coldheart* isn't trying to wow you with anything other than a thrilling story. True, it's not going to rock our understanding of the Doctor's world like an *Interference*, but very few of the TV classics ever did either.



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Shelf Life's desk has accumulated a number of Harlequin box sets, released monthly in instant armies of seven.

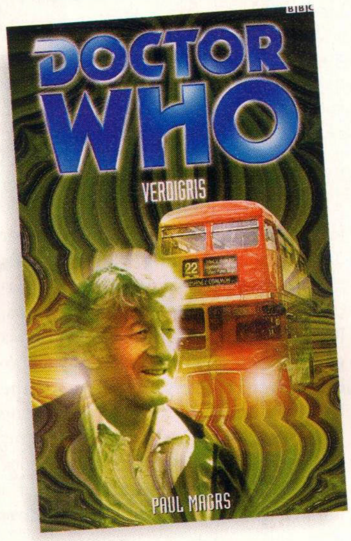
On the proof of *Coldheart*, tactical Draconians plan a pincer movement on string-vested Sea Devils; sculpted with beakier features, they're something of an improvement on the originals.

Beside the Big Finish discs crouch Chancellery Guards. All this conflicts with the box blurb, that insists the Sea Devils are attacking a sleeping UNIT encampment, while the Chancellery Guards are battling Sontarans in a scene too exciting to make *The Invasion of Time*'s final edit.

All sets contain profile information for play in the *Invasion Earth* tabletop game [see **DWM** 280]. The unbelievably ugly London Resistance civilians possess all the 'sneak', 'move fast' and 'hide' actions their opponents lack. Personally, I'd take the monsters. This vicious-looking bunch look the type who'd view Daleks as packed lunch, biting through the casing with their own teeth to get at them.

The War Machines are the latest – numbering just two and requiring assembly. Under a Post Office Tower whipped up from Pringles tubes, they've proved quite this month's greatest distraction, skidded around the desk until their evil made my hands prickle with a strange sensation.

DOCTOR WHO: VERDIGRIS



Novel BBC Books **Author** Paul Magrs **Featuring** The Third Doctor, Jo Grant and Iris Wildthyme **RRP** £5.99 **ISBN** 0 563 55592 0 **Available** Now

Digging the seventies in a groovy Paul Magrs novel that mixes Doctor Who fact and fiction.

Back when original *Doctor Who* fiction boasted "stories too broad and too deep for the small screen", the message was that, in a medium uncompromised by television budgets and time slots, *Doctor Who* would be *better*. After all, even Target books had smoothed the edges of unsatisfactory visuals – note the Myrka's makeover as a pocket Tyrannosaurus. What this reckons without is that, between fans at least, there's a lot of fun to be derived from the programme's cheerful cheesiness.

Set in 1973, *Verdigris* is a Past Doctor adventure that doesn't skip its era's dodgy production values. Paul Magrs is less nostalgic about 1973 *per se* than he is about the TV it produced. He presents the period like a television tie-in, with real life subject to TV's bold presentation, its action determined by how cameras may have seen it, its special effects achieved cheaply with sequins and a mixing desk on loan from *Top of the Pops*. *Verdigris* takes *Doctor Who*'s often unsophisticated visuals and re-employs them, warts and all, half suggesting their obviousness was intentional and half encouraging us to scoff. So when a character teleports, it is with an "eerie, tinselling glow" – a straight description of a cheap effect rather than anything more imaginative.

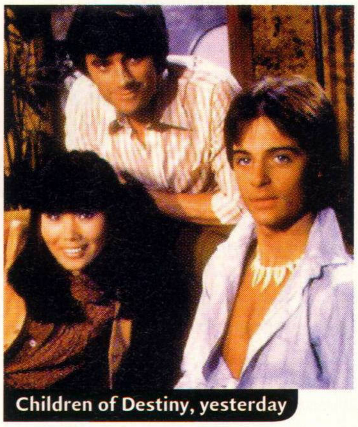
Like **DWM**'s own *Time Team*, *Verdigris* loves and laughs at its source material in equal proportion – amazed at the scope and ideas while noting how clichéd the plot is, or how wooden the acting. Transforming Mike Yates into a cardboard cut-out, later folded up and popped into Jo's handbag, fits with the novel's other, cheekier approach, and shows how its fiction is heavily informed by critical fan opinion. Furthermore, in proposing that UNIT is a sham – its personnel are actors, its invasions faked with Dalek operators and zip-up monster-suits – it is a fiction often indistinguishable from the realities of *Doctor Who* production.

Pitting the Third Doctor against the superhuman Children of Destiny, Magrs plays *Doctor Who* off against *The Tomorrow People*, ITV's limp sci-fi challenge. The two shows are trumpeted into the ring of bright and budget-priced adventure to slog it out in a competition of production standards, clichés and conventions. Each spends time on the ropes. Even their off-screen rivalry is referred to, with the Doctor's lack of regard for the youngsters reflecting Jon Pertwee's own dismissal of *The Tomorrow People* as serious opposition.

Little of the rival's premise is changed, other than the names of its leads, although, for superbeings, they remain as resolutely unimpressive as the original's John and Stephen. Even their computer, the TARDIS-like Tim, has found promotion difficult, with *Verdigris* dubbing him Simon.

Not content to capture its era with just gaudiness and glam rock chic, *Verdigris* mirrors a time when women were dolls, and masculinity meant Brut and Burt Reynolds. But the introduction of sexagenarian Time Lady Iris Wildthyme and her new companion Tom, who is both gay and black, neatly challenges the era's compartmentalist thinking.

Verdigris may also offer a few clues to *The Blue Angel*. While not solving the entire riddle, there are links to the Meercocks – aliens who adopt the forms of literary characters – a notion with which Magrs flies the flag for silliness. His choosing to speed *Great Expectations*' cobwebbed Miss Haversham around an amusement arcade's race-track reminds the reader that 1973 was not only the time of Jon Pertwee and *The Tomorrow People*, but also *The Goodies*, who would gleefully spin out entertainment from such absurdities.



Children of Destiny, yesterday

Using techniques like diary extracts, and even security camera footage, *Verdigris* views *Doctor Who* from a variety of perspectives. With the tiniest shift in emphasis, it could so easily have become sarcastic towards 1970s telefantasy. Instead it is a celebration, a memory of a time when TV had the best theme tunes ever. *Verdigris* reminds you of being a kid and why you've stayed a fan. **DWM**

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So thrilling, you must be there...

A kind of magi

Season sixteen

by **Alan Barnes**

season sixteen

What you see is what you get in Season 16, the rambling 26-parter which details the Doctor's hunt for the six segments of the fabulous Key to Time; even the most committed pseud would be hard pushed to winkle out a single allegory or subtext from any of its six stories. There's no *Sun Makers*-style satire, no *Underworld*-esque homage to myth and legend; even its sole pastiche, *The Androids of Tara*, makes so little effort to disguise its roots in Anthony Hope's *The Prisoner of Zenda* that it'd be disingenuous to describe it as anything less than a free adaptation.

Perhaps that's why Season 16 has never really been subject to fannish re-evaluation, the way the reputations of the other two Graham Williams-produced years which sandwich it have been turned topsy-turvy and back again several times over the last 20-odd years. So *The Ribos Operation* is still seen as worthy but dull; *The Pirate Planet* remains officially 'an entertaining but muddled mish-mash of ideas'; *The Stones of Blood* retains its ranking as the best of the bunch, its final two hyperspace-set episodes notwithstanding; *The Androids of Tara* is, as ever, trivial but fun; *The Power of Kroll* stays, quite simply, simply crap; and the world has not yet learned to stop worrying and love *The Armageddon Factor*, the *Dr Strangelove* on a shoestring (except, of course, it isn't) which has never been seen as anything other than 'a bit of a let-down, all told'.

It isn't even terribly camp. Oh yes, there are those who'll give a meaningful nudge and a wink at every line said by or about sausage sandwich-lover Vivien Fay ("Was there ever a Senor Camara?") in a doomed bid to reclaim the Cessair of Diplos as a predatory lesbian (turn back to *Robot*'s Miss Winters, I say, if that's your sort of thing). Likewise, we've been told that goateed *ubervillain* Count Grendel of Gracht is a knowingly self-aware creation; nonsense. When Grendel makes his escape over his castle battlements with the (admittedly, rather wonderful) promise "Next time, I shall not be so lenient!", the truth is he actually *means* it. And so on: the Captain has a motorised parrot, the Polyphase Avatron, *because he's a pirate, dummy*; Atrios looks like a representation of London in the Blitz *because it's being blitzed*; even the swamp thing which menaces Romana on Delta Magna looks like a man in a silly costume *because it's a man in a silly costume*. It really is that simple.

So, The Key to Time saga may be big, but it's far from clever. But perhaps I'd better make my position crystal clear at this point: this is Good. Having been hopelessly traumatised by *Pyramids of Mars*, my mother forbade me from watching *Doctor Who* for years (yes, there was a time before bedroom VCRs and streaming QuickTime files when parents were physically able to do this sort of thing). *The Power of Kroll* Part Three (or, let's be honest, *The Key to Time* Part Nineteen) was my way back in – a reward for having been left waiting for a bus in the slush outside Brent Cross Shopping Centre for nearly two hours. It was different. *Doctor Who* hadn't been emasculated by Mrs Whitehouse; so far as I was concerned, it had been improved no end. This wasn't a horror

No turn unstoned: the Doctor, Romana and K9 rumble with *The Stones of Blood*

Photos: BBC Video [4]

A bridge too far: rehearsals for *The Pirate Planet*

show – it was an instalment from a rather marvellous adventure series, somewhere in between the endless holiday morning reruns of *Flash Gordon's Trip to Mars* and the Sunday teatime serials fetishised as a family ritual (even now, I can't even contemplate the title *Children of the New Forest* without feeling a sudden urge to consume several slices of Mr Kipling's stodgy Bakewell Tart); like them, *Doctor Who* was all castles and dungeons and dragons, princes, princesses and wicked uncles. You don't believe me? There are castles or citadels of some description in four of the six stories, various royal families in five. Even the Doctor, in this season, is basically a knight-cum-wizard on a magical quest accompanied by a grumbling, ambitious apprentice (more so than 'assistant', certainly; Romana even gets to carry a sorcerer's wand, the Tracer, throughout).

Doctor Who hadn't been emasculated by Mrs Whitehouse; as far as I was concerned it had been improved no end

Recently, in the pages of **DWM** and elsewhere, the idea has arisen that maybe, just maybe, new *Doctor Who* shouldn't be produced as a multi-million dollar, continuity-driven sci-fi franchise; oh no, it should be an uncomplicated adventure series for nine year-old children made on a budget of twopence. Which is about as precise a definition of Season 16 as it's possible to get. Be careful what you wish for, then, if you've never been excited by most of the following: the aircar in *The Pirate Planet*, and the Doctor walking the Captain's plank; the Doctor being tried by the Megara in *The Stones of Blood* (you should definitely prefer the hyperspace scenes to the occult and all that magic bit earlier on. In fact, your heart should sink slightly when you see in the *Radio Times* that the next story is set on boring old Earth); the very *idea* of electric swords; Kroll; the Marshal rubbing his neck and talking into a two-way mirror with a glowing skull behind it; the Doctor rescuing K9 from an Atrian furnace; Drax; Drax miniaturising the Doctor; the incredibly shrunk Drax and the Doctor travelling about inside K9; and the invention of the Randomiser, the season's *coup de grace*. All of these enraptured my nine year-old imagination when I saw the shows, or caught the summer repeats, or read the books (hence nothing from *The Ribos Operation*, because Ian Marter's novelisation really was too much like hard work).

But, strangely, no-one ever talks about many of these bits; no-one mentions, for example, the Doctor being bamboozled by five illusory Romanas in *The Armageddon Factor*, the second most exciting thing about Part Twenty-Five (after K9 becoming evil. Obviously). Or if they do, they miss the point entirely; they say, for example, that the finale – wherein the Doctor refuses to give the assembled Key to the White Guardian, having surmised that he is, in fact, the Black – is somehow disappointing. They say that Tom Baker overacts ludicrously when the Doctor's finally got the completed Key in his grasp, and he wonders "What if I wasn't alright?" – appearing to actually contemplate seizing the power at his command. The fledgling Fourth Doctor gets a not-dissimilar scene with a couple of wires in *Genesis of the Daleks*, and it's been feted to the skies: if Tom goes all grave and broody, it seems, he's magnificent; if, however, he rolls his eyeballs, he's awful. But the progression of the Key to Time finale, and the interplay between Baker and Black Guardian Valentine Dyall, is actually very good indeed. Any idiot can deliver a soliloquy with a degree of gravity; it takes a different kind of fool altogether to attempt to pull off going from snarling maniac to gabbling expositor to forelock-tugging servant, then to suspicion, to decision and finally to triumphalism – plus share dialogue with two others, one of who is sat in front of a blue screen at the other end of the studio! – all in the space of one three-minute sequence. (Baker's all-or-nothing confidence, in fact, is the truly awe-inspiring thing.)

I'm writing this as a grown-up coming down from watching all 12-and-a-bit hours of Season 16 in one 24-hour period, and I don't feel in the least bit cheated by the climax – nor, indeed, by any part of the epic whole. Because for most of that time, I've been a wide-eyed nine year-old, boggling, goggling and thrilled – and, quite frankly, I'd much rather be a fresh-faced and keen nine again than a peevish, hard-to-impress and increasingly haggard 30. "Your silliness is noted," K9 tells Drax at one point, which strikes me as a good enough epigram for the whole damn season. This silliness – this big, engrossing, children's storybook piece of silliness – is noted, noteworthy, and terribly, terribly good. DWM

I'm going slightly mad

Season seventeen

by **Philip MacDonald**

There's no doubt about it; no other era of *Doctor Who* has changed quite so much over the past 20 years. Season 17 is barely recognisable these days.

When *Doctor Who* fans first began getting in touch with one another in significant numbers, via the smudgy pages of mind-bogglingly low-tech Gestetnered fanzines, they did so against the backdrop of Season 17. The birth of organised *Doctor Who* fandom is usually dated to the mid-1970s, but the heyday of the fan didn't really kick in until the end of the decade. The sudden, torrential flood of fan activity between 1979 and 1983 can be attributed in the main to two particular epiphanies.

It's almost impossible now to evoke the sheer hatred directed against Season 17 by fans in the early 1980s

Firstly, as **DWM**'s 20th anniversary issue recently reminded us, there was the arrival in October 1979 of a weekly publication that brought to its readers a shocking new awareness that they weren't alone. Then, in April 1983, in an orgy of publicity generated by *Doctor Who*'s own 20th birthday, the BBC's now-legendary Longleat Celebration rode the crest of the wave. By 1983 groups like the DWAS had already been up and running for years, but the massive groundswell catalysed by Longleat saw the true birth of *Doctor Who* fandom as an integrated micro-society, with its own hierarchies, celebrities, internecine squabbles and silent majority. But in those long-gone days of photocopied newsletters and grungy tenth-generation videotapes, fandom was a very different beast from the multi-media, multi-task, multi-conscious organism it is today. In many ways it was more vigorous, but at the same time it was more tribal. Without doubt it was far, far more primitive. And one of the things on which a primitive society depends is a fundamental sense of demonism: it can't function without a good, solid sacrificial scapegoat.

It's almost impossible now to evoke the sheer hatred that was directed against Season 17 by fans in the early 1980s. If you tried cross-breeding the current reputations of *The Twin Dilemma* and *Dimensions in Time*, then multiplying by ten, you still wouldn't come anywhere near. When I and thousands like me first joined fandom, the phrase 'Season 17' was something that went far beyond the 20 televised episodes it circumscribed. 'Season 17' represented the acme of crap, the very badge of disastrous, worthless, laughable rubbish, and woe betide anybody who dared disagree. There were a brave few who did, and how we ridiculed them. My heart sinks to recall the sheer bald contempt in which we held any so-called fan who had the gall to suggest that *Destiny of the Daleks* was anything other than the worst *Doctor Who* story of all time – apart from *The Horns of Nimon*, of course.

Photos: BBC Video [4]

With the benefit of hindsight it's not difficult to see how this state of affairs came about. Nowadays the three seasons overseen by producer Graham Williams have been the subject of some sensible and enthusiastic revisionism, but the tendency towards eccentric storylines and a superficially light-hearted gloss was exactly what an emerging cult following didn't want. In its early adolescence fandom wanted to take itself very seriously, and quite naturally it preferred the straight-ahead, no-gags approach of the early John Nathan-Turner seasons. Jelly babies, robot dogs and arch performance styles were out. Cybermen, killed-off companions and TARDIS mythology by the bucketload were very definitely in.

But there's more to it than that. Season 17 began in September 1979, a month ahead of **Doctor Who Weekly**, which dutifully promoted the show in exactly the style you'd expect from what was first and foremost a children's comic. One suspects that there are fans who still make a mental connection between the two and think less of Season 17 for it. More importantly, 1979 was also the year in which the domestic video recorder began arriving in the nation's better-off living rooms, and as a result there were many fans whose first-ever *Doctor Who* video was *The Horns of Nimon*, hot off the heads of the family's exciting new Christmas present. The summer repeats of *Destiny of the Daleks* and *City of Death* followed soon behind. No longer was *Doctor Who* restricted to that one hastily snatched viewing before being swept off into the ether; now it could be played and replayed, scrutinised and cross-examined. And what does familiarity breed? Well, exactly.

An unfriendly reception on Skonnos in *The Horns of Nimon*

The embarrassing thing is that nearly all of us believed it. In 1983 it was a *fact* that Season 17 was appalling tosh, in the same way that in 1483 it was a fact that the world was flat. Today, when so many of us have come to appreciate *City of Death* as one of the greatest (if not *the* greatest) of all *Doctor Who* stories, this seems incredible. What sinister breed of lunacy overwhelmed us? Too jokey, too silly, we cried. All right, so Tom's infamous "arms, legs, everything" routine in *Nightmare of Eden* is certainly a step too far, but nothing in Season 17, not even that, is any sillier than the slapstick gunge-fight in *The Trial of a Time Lord* Part Four, or Troughton's foam frolics in *The Seeds of Death*, or Pertwee's sandwich-eating antics in *The Sea Devils*.

Beardy dissident Organon points out the trail of *The Creature From the Pit*

Oh but look, naff effects, tacky models, we gibbered. But here we were quite simply *wrong*. The model work in *City of Death* and *The Creature From the Pit* was the best the show had ever seen at that time. The collapse of the mummified Anethan corpse in *The Horns of Nimon* is one of the most striking visual effects in 1970s *Doctor Who*. The forcefield corridor from the TARDIS in the same story, and the merging of the spaceships in *Nightmare of Eden*, established entirely new horizons for the video effects department. By contemporary standards, most of the effects in Season 17 are quite simply superb.

Ridiculous monsters, we whooped. Apart from the Jagaroth, we added grudgingly. But are the Mandrels and the Nimons really any worse than the Foamasi or the Garm? The Tythonian might have ended up a grand folly, but at least the production team was thinking big – and if it was a toss-up between that and the Myrka, I know which I'd choose.

Shoddy production values, we crowed. I'm sorry? Is the Ealing Studios jungle in *The Creature From the Pit* shoddier than the Television Centre jungle in *Kinda*? Is the sumptuous location work in *City of Death* and *Shada* an embarrassment? Is the presence of Julian Glover, Catherine Schell, Geoffrey Bayldon and John Cleese something to be ashamed of?

No season of *Doctor Who* is perfect, and of course Season 17 has its duff moments. There are the recycled costumes, the poorly choreographed extras, a desperately disappointing Davros, and yes, Tom does indeed go over the top a couple of times – but nowhere near as often as we once liked to claim. Doubters are advised to reconsider his long-faced encounters with Davros ("They have achieved great things?"/"Oh yes, oh yes . . ."); with Countess Scarlioni ("How discreet, how charming"); Adrasta ("No, *you* have a care"); Tryst ("Go away"); and Karela ("Are you willing to sacrifice your life and the lives of everyone on this planet for wealth?") – and ponder the surprising amount of genuine gravitas which counterbalances the tomfoolery. Considering that Baker's performance is never more of a tightrope act than in this season, we should perhaps forgive him the occasional wobble. He's playing the Doctor on a knife-edge, and 99% of the time what he's doing is immaculately judged. And his on-screen rapport with Lalla Ward is justly the stuff of legend.

Yet there are still plenty of Season 17-haters, many of them older fans who cling to the endearing belief that the Troughton era is somehow more serious and frightening than anything Tom was ever involved in. People who long ago embraced a talking penguin as a welcome addition to the *Doctor Who* legend are still prepared to lambast *City of Death* for its 'unrealistic' gangsters.

Well, whatever. The rest of us have taken a deep breath and opened our eyes. Watching *Destiny of the Daleks* without prejudice, one is suddenly struck by the alarming possibility that this might actually be the best-directed *Doctor Who* story of the pre-Graeme Harper era. Certainly no other production before *The Caves of Androzani* can boast a fraction of the zest and panache on display in *Destiny*'s location camerawork (and the studio sequences are almost as remarkable, with Ken Grieve's trademark low-angle shots investing the Daleks with some serious screen clout). I am overcome with shame to think I once joined the pack in writing off this story. And as for *The Horns of Nimon*, once the most reviled contender of all – well, anyone who still hasn't got the point of Graham Crowden's performance probably needs a lot of loving.

When Season 17 began appearing on BBC Video and on UK Gold a few years ago, **DWM** received several letters from younger fans who were seeing the stories for the first time and were utterly bemused by the tales' atrocious reputations. Thankfully these people are now our torch-bearers. The herd mentality which once prevailed has largely been consigned to history, and the gradual rehabilitation of Season 17 in our collective opinion can be considered an enactment in miniature of the gradual maturation of *Doctor Who* fandom over the last 20 years.

No, there's no doubt about it. Season 17 ain't what it used to be. And three cheers for that. **DWM**

Who wants to live forever?

season eighteen

Facing an uncertain future: a typically gloomy Tom Baker publicity still from Season 18

Season eighteen

by **Gary Gillatt**

There's a fun game you can play with Season 18. The rules are simple: you watch the seven serials in production, rather than broadcast, order – with *State of Decay* pre-empting *Full Circle* – and try to spot the *precise* moment that Tom Baker decides to leave *Doctor Who*.

We know Tom was, in principle, as committed as ever to the series at the start of the year, probably because he was still drunk (and I don't mean that metaphorically) from the year-long party that had been Season 17. And it must have been a great party for Tom. Fine wines flowed freely, the great and the good laughed at his jokes and bowed to his every request, and – perhaps the measure of the *best* parties – he even managed to score with the prettiest girl on the guest list. You only have to watch *The Creature From the Pit* followed by *City of Death* (production order again!) to know that it was Paris in the spring when Tom copped off with Lalla and there was, just for once, hanky-panky in the TARDIS.

But the price of an amazing party is an amazing hangover. Season 18 is Tom's hangover, thoughtfully broadcast to millions by the BBC. He's shaken awake on Brighton Beach the next morning and then stumbles listlessly through half of the episodes that follow. And he's obviously feeling very sick indeed.

It's ironic that *The Leisure Hive* should feature a sequence where the Doctor is forcibly aged before our eyes, because that is just what seems to happen to Tom himself over the course of Season 18. He's pink-cheeked, bright-eyed and big-haired on the beach in the story's opening scenes. By the time we reach the E-space stories, it's not just the Vampires that look like death warmed up – Tom is gaunt, pale and forcibly permed. By Traken, our star looks a good ten years older than he did in *The Horns of Nimon*; suddenly grey-faced and lined like a pea-popping Argolin.

So Tom is tired and Tom is ill, but he's been tired and ill before. He needs better reason than *that* to leave *Doctor Who*. After all, at the close of the 1970s, Tom Baker was officially King of the World. He was, as the man himself will tell anyone who wants to listen, *adored*. When he appeared on the TV news magazine *Nationwide* – clearly either drunk or only very recently and head-achingly sober – to announce his departure from *Doctor Who* and lazily bully Sue Cook, he is clear on the fact that he is heading into "oblivion". Why choose oblivion above adoration?

Perhaps Lalla Ward is the key here. Eye-witness accounts of the time suggest that, after the initial romancing in Paris, their ardour had cooled somewhat by the time of recording of Season 18. Producer John Nathan-Turner recounts how the Acton rehearsal rooms had areas dubbed 'The Blue Corner' and 'The Red Corner', where the Doctor and Romana – sorry, Tom and Lalla – would sit during lunch breaks, exchanging not a word as they beavered on crosswords and tapestries respectively. But then, between the first and second recording blocks of *State of Decay*, love blossomed again. One week, Tom's only communication with Lalla was in the third person via the floor manager ("She can climb down herself! She's not a bloody cripple!"). Next week, they informed the director of their engagement.

By this point, Lalla Ward knew she was leaving *Doctor Who*. Is it possible that it was only through knowing that he was taking such a large part of his work, his *world*, with him – by marrying his assistant – that Tom could feel strong enough to let *Doctor Who* go? Could oblivion be faced more bravely now he seemed to have, literally, a lifetime companion?

I would argue that Tom had more-or-less made up his mind to go by the time *Full Circle* reached the studio. There's a glorious moment in Part One that takes on new meaning when viewed with knowledge of the behind-the-scenes situation. Romana has been told she has to return to Gallifrey, and she's very surprised that the Doctor doesn't want to fight that destiny, instead seeming happy for their travels to be over. Romana gives up on the argument, saying, "So there's nothing more to discuss then. We have to go." Looking into space, the Doctor gives the wistful response, "Hmmn. I'm afraid so." It could so easily be Tom recognising the inevitable – that their, that *his*, time is finally over.

Tom Baker always played the Doctor according to his mood. When he was feeling happy and dynamic, the Doctor was happy and dynamic. When Tom was feeling pissed off, the Doctor was pissed off. You only have to look to *Horror of Fang Rock* for evidence of this. Tom was dragged from the centre of London – the centre of the world for a committed Soho boho – to proletarian Birmingham, to record a troubled serial for a director he didn't seem to respect. ("Just *walk* through the door will you Tom?") On Fang Rock, the Doctor isn't angry and bitter because he's trapped with a murderous Rutan and half-a-dozen vain and greedy humans. He's angry because *Tom* is angry – trapped with an argumentative Paddy Russell 150 miles from The Coach and Horses.

The inseparability of the moods of the Doctor and the moods of Tom Baker is what makes Season 18 so fascinating. The reason these serials seem to tell such a coherent story is nothing at all to do with the recurrence of CVE's, E-space and the Master. That steadily-building end-of era mood wasn't written in by script editor Bidmead (who was too busy dreaming up such gems as: "Reconfiguration of our two TARDISes into Time Cone Inverters . . . creating a stable, safe zone by applying temporal inversion isometry to as much of space-time as we can isolate"), it comes entirely from Tom. Season 18 is not the story of the death of the Fourth Doctor, it's the story of the departure of Tom Baker. It's his sense of resignation that dictates the tone.

It's Tom Baker's sense of resignation that dictates the tone of Season 18

This is also why Adric fits so poorly into the proceedings. This is a time for endings, not beginnings. The Doctor seems to have no interest in making new friends because he already knows his time is up. This is because Tom Baker had no interest in making new friends. On set, Baker was telling Matthew Waterhouse to "piss off" when he tried to make a contribution to the script. If Baker had more freedom, one might easily imagine the Doctor shouting the same abuse at Adric as soon as he poked his face into the TARDIS control room.

It all comes to a head in the closing tale, *Logopolis*. Many have commented on the sense of impending doom present in this story and attributed it to the grim tolling of the Cloister Bell and the eerie, sinister presence of the Watcher. But it's still all about Tom Baker, really. Even before the Watcher appears Tom is playing the Doctor as a man who knows his days are numbered. In the end, it's entirely appropriate that the Watcher turns out to have been the next incarnation of the Doctor all the time – waiting for his moment to take over. His lurking presence subdues and undermines the Time Lord in the same way Peter Davison's visits to the production office must have traumatised Tom Baker.

Then there's that final scene . . . The Doctor is hanging from a radio telescope, having saved the universe with the tug of a cable. But the Doctor has been in much more dire situations than this, why should he die now?

Again, we shouldn't be thinking about the Doctor at all. Think about Tom Baker . . . He's hanging by a thread. He's having flashbacks to happier days – to actors he respected and loved and good times had by all. From this vantage point he can look down and see an undesirable possible future in the form of three new juvenile co-stars and a production team more controlling than any other he has worked with.

Clambering from the dangling cable, the Doctor gets a good grip on the gantry of the telescope. Surely he can now climb to safety? He may have been warned of his fate by the Watcher, but hasn't the Doctor resisted fate before? Why not now? Why not choose life?

Never mind the Watcher. Tom has seen Peter Davison on *The Nine O'Clock News*. This future can't be fought. Oblivion is waiting.

You see, the Doctor, Tom Baker, doesn't slip and fall from that radio telescope at all . . .
He lets go.

You can understand why Tom has complained that his final moments as the Doctor, lying twisted on the ground, didn't make him look "heroic" enough. After all, by forcing himself to let go – to let go of *Doctor Who*, that is – he'd done the bravest thing of all. **DWM**

Unwelcome visitor: the Doctor with new friend Adri

Photos: BBC Video [4]

It's the end, but . . .

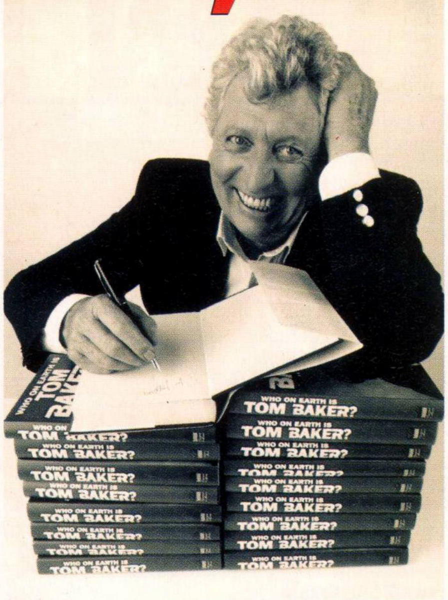
by **The Watcher**

When *Who On Earth is Tom Baker?* was published a couple of years ago, I was among the many souls who went along to one of its author's signing sessions at a provincial branch of Dillons. At the end of his short address, cherry-picked from familiar anecdotes about the joys of ironing and chance encounters with estranged family members, Mr Baker told us that whatever we may think, we don't really know who he is at all. And of course, he was absolutely right.

Tom Baker inhabits a peculiar wormhole in the galaxy of *Doctor Who* celebrities. Even to the most well-informed fan, the title of his autobiography remains remarkably apt. By comparison we have a fairly good idea of who, for example, Jon Pertwee was. Or at the very least we have a comfortably gratifying construct that we are happy to call 'Jon Pertwee' – the larger-than-life showman, the raconteur with a love of fast cars, the vaudevillean with a stock of funny voices, the star-quality leading man prey to his occasional little vanities. We're all pretty much agreed on who 'Jon Pertwee' was – as an accurate portrait of the flesh-and-blood man it might even be entirely wrong, but that doesn't really matter. It's the character that the real Jon Pertwee consistently showed to the world.

The trouble with Tom Baker, and perhaps the secret of our abiding fascination with him, is that there seem to be so many different versions of the man. There's Tom Baker the children's hero who played the most enduringly popular *Doctor Who*; there's Tom Baker the earthy grown-up actor who bared all and won legitimate acclaim in heavyweight engagements with Pasolini and Olivier; Tom Baker the Left Bank hedonist who drank away the best years of his life with Francis Bacon and Jeffrey Bernard in the flesh-pots of Soho; Tom Baker the unattainable ex-Doctor who declines to collaborate with his counterparts on screen or off; Tom Baker the self-made eccentric who seems ever more fixated on Catholicism, graveyards and getting mistaken for middle-aged women; Tom Baker the author, whose attempt at a children's novel results in a grotesquely delicious medieval morality play peppered with doses of Belloc, Hoffmann and Artaud. Of these and many more Tom Bakers, which, if any, is the real one? As he quite rightly pointed out in that bookshop, we have no way of knowing. Small wonder, perhaps, that Lalla Ward has apparently attributed the failure of her first marriage to a naive belief that she was wedding the Doctor rather than the man who played him.

The Boy Who Kicked Pigs is a perfect illustration of the proximity between precision and chaos that seems to hold sway in Tom Baker's cast of mind. His intensely pleasurable erudition, his famously black humour and his seemingly Dickensian facility for getting straight to the nub of his anger are there on every page. The simultaneous absence of a novelist's conventional self-discipline isn't necessarily a failing – it allows Baker to veer off into periphrastic digressions that often yield the greatest enjoyment – and this freedom from self-governance certainly appears to be an abiding motif of his career. Baker the actor recalls being told by an agent that he couldn't so much as walk through a door convincingly – to which his rejoinder was that he had no wish to do such a thing, having only ever wanted to walk through a door *interestingly*.



So what are we to make of Tom Baker now, as he crosses yet another interesting threshold and proceeds to carve out a reinvigorated career as a thinking man's Peter Ustinov, delighting BBC producers with his rarefied interview technique on *Doctor Who* theme nights, or tickling the masses with his Dadaist observations on *Have I Got News For You?* Was he always like that? Or did *Doctor Who* do it to him? For that matter, did *we* do it to him? What's Tom Baker playing at?

There seems to be many different Tom Bakers. But which is the real one?

The Final Test

Are you brainier than BOSS and wiser than WOTAN? As usual, there are no prizes – it's just for fun. Answers next issue.

What connects:

1 A robot, a convict and a bartender?
2 Toby, Lon, Tyssan and Lady Eleanor [pictured]?
3 The Human League, Nena, Rick Astley and no other recording artistes of the 1980s?
4 *The Daleks' Master Plan*, *The Ark*, *Planet of the Daleks* and *The Face of Evil*?
5 An automated spaceship, a deadly statue, a doomed collector?
6 The Krynoid and Zebedee from *The Magic Roundabout*?

Answers from last issue

1 All called Russell (*Attack of the Cybermen*; *Terror of the Autons*; *The War Games*).
2 The actors who played them (Daniel Peacock, Patrick Newell, Hale & Pace, Alexei Sayle) all appeared in *The Young Ones*.
3 They were the first new episodes of *Doctor Who* to be screened in the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s respectively.
4 The actors who played them (Jean Marsh, Liza Goddard, Lalla Ward) are all one-time wives of different Doctors (Jon Pertwee, Colin Baker and Tom Baker respectively).
5 The first of each pair is the reverse of the other: Arak/Kara, Liz/Zil, Aram/Mara.
6 Elton John: Peri likens a statuette to the singer in *Planet of Fire*; the second episode of *The Gunfighters* has an almost identical title to Elton's Number One album *Don't Shoot Me I'm Only The Piano Player*; and Eldred (in *The Seeds of Death*) is a 'rocket man'. I did warn you.

It's a curse of celebrity that the victim is condemned forever to live up to the moment when he or she burned the brightest, and it's not without reason that we find it easier to bestow unconditional worship on those whose flames are extinguished prematurely. One has only to consider the case of John Lennon, regarded today as one of the brightest stars in rock's firmament and without question the greatest of the Beatles. It may be verging on the tasteless to speculate, but would the same really be true if we lived in a parallel universe in which Paul McCartney had taken the bullet instead? The author of *Hey Jude* and *Yesterday* would never have had the chance to inflict on us the Frog Chorus or *Spies Like Us*, and instead we'd now have a paunchy 60-year-old Lennon churning out endless peacenik charity singles. One suspects we'd have got sick of him circa Live Aid. It gives one pause, does it not?

Getting shot into legend may be a somewhat drastic contingency, but artists of a certain stripe – be they actors, writers, painters or musicians – have always known that the best way to preserve their stock is to ration themselves in public and remain an enigma. Look at Marlon Brando, Samuel Beckett – or Kate Bush, even. But look on the other hand at how someone like Jeanette Winterson, one of the finest new novelists of the 1980s, has single-handedly mauled her own credibility by proving utterly incapable of shutting up about her own work for one perishing picosecond. Like George Bernard Shaw before her, she seems hell-bent on annotating and prefacing and explaining every last sentence she's ever written, with the result that she, like Shaw, has done much to evaporate the mystery of her own creativity.

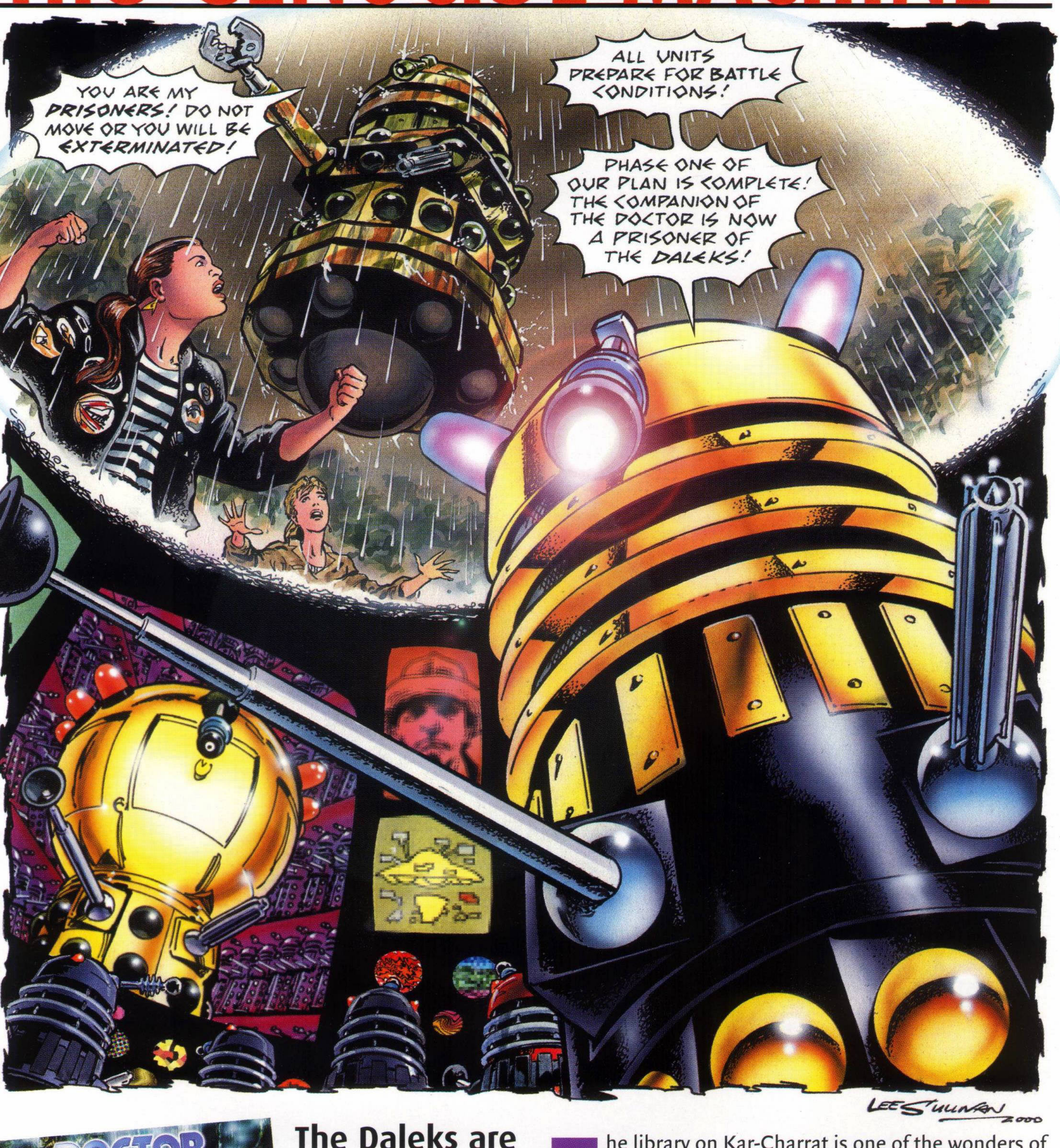
Over the years, *Doctor Who* fans have become familiar – over-familiar, perhaps – with the character, disposition and opinions of many of the programme's architects. After endless years of parroted convention routines, how can we ever watch a story like *The Dæmons* without filtering it through a ghoulish goulash of anecdotes and platitudes? The stars of *The Dæmons* have changed the story itself forever, and we made them do it. That's not necessarily a bad thing, but it unquestionably wreaks an incalculable difference on the way we perceive the original programmes. It's not only *Doctor Who* fandom that has moved into this new realm in recent years – fans of the Beatles can never again listen to *Sgt Pepper's* in the same way now that the *Anthology* CDs have picked apart the steps toward that classic album's completion, while the poems of Philip Larkin assume new resonances now that the author's personal papers – against the stipulation of his will – have been posthumously published. Good or bad, the deed is done. We live in the age of bonus tracks, behind-the-scenes trivia and illuminating footnotes.

It's interesting to consider that William Hartnell passed away before we could formulate a 'William Hartnell', so all we have to go on are the conflicting and disconcertingly realistic recollections of his colleagues. We never had the chance to push him on stage at some hotel to play the fool with a water-pistol. Patrick Troughton presented a captivating mystery for many years after he left the role until, tempted out of hiding during the last few years of his life, he successfully punctured his own aura.

So after all these years you've got to hand it to Tom Baker, who has maintained a vital element of mystique that's still doing its work today. He's nobody's fool. We still want him. We're still intrigued by him. We still don't know who on Earth he is.

Grayswandir

The GENOCIDE MACHINE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LEE SULLIVAN 2000

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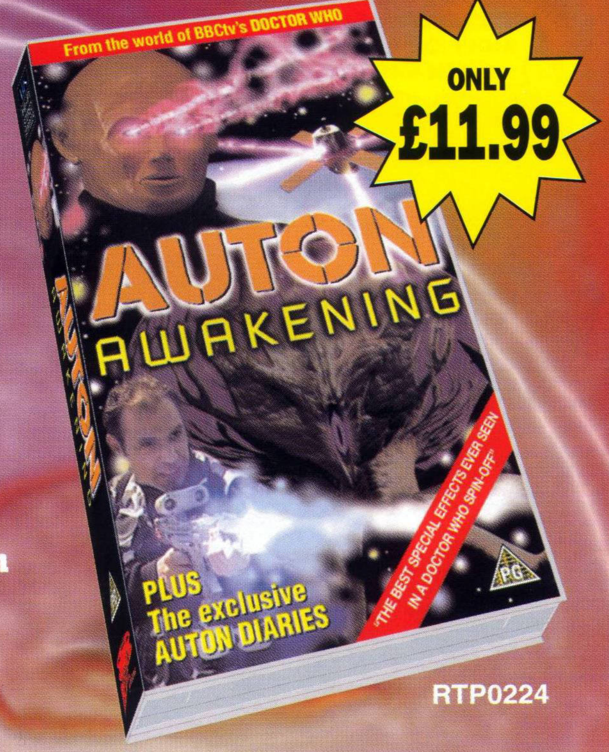
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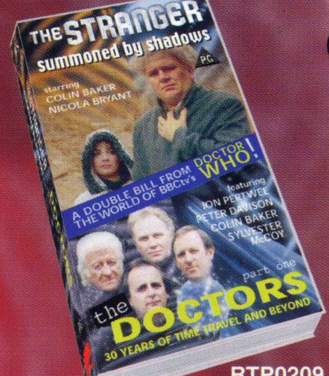
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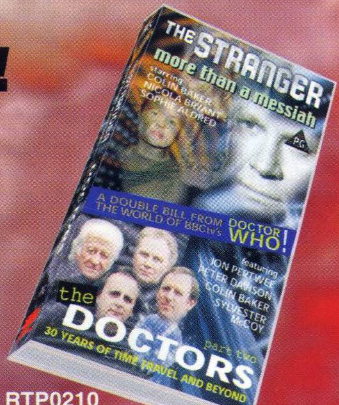
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